

THE SUBLIME STATUS OF  
**SAYYIDUNĀ ABŪ BAKR AND  
SAYYIDUNĀ ‘UMAR**



AN ABRIDGMENT OF  
**MATLA’ AL-QAMARAYN**  
**FĪ IBĀNAT SABQAT AL-‘UMARAYN**  
**IMĀM AHMAD RIDĀ KHĀN AL-QĀDIRĪ**

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# The Sublime Status

of

Sayyidunā Abū Bakr and  
Sayyidunā ‘Umar

An abridgment of:

Maṭla‘ al-Qamarayn fī Ibānat Sabqat al-  
‘Umarayn

Imām Aḥmad Rīdā Khān al-Qādirī

**Book Name:** The Sublime Status of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr and Sayyidunā 'Umar

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«إِذَا ظَهَرَتِ الْفِتْنَةُ وَسَبَّ أَصْحَابَيِ قَدِيرٍ ظَهِيرَ الْعَالِمِ  
عَلَيْهِ فَمِنْ لَمْ يَفْعَلْ فَعَلَيْهِ لَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ  
وَالثَّائِسِ أَجْمَعِينَ لَا يَعْبُدُ اللَّهُ مِنْهُ صَرْفًا وَلَا عَدْلًا»

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On the authority of Sayyidunā Mu'ādh ibn Jabal رض who reports that the Messenger of Allāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said:

"When dissensions become manifest and my Companions are reviled, then let every knower express his knowledge; as whosoever does not, upon him is the curse of Allāh and His Angels and the entirety of mankind; Allāh shall accept none of his obligatory nor voluntary acts of worship."

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[al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, Abū Bakr Ahmad ibn 'Alī,  
*al-Jāmi' li-Akhlāq al-Rāwī wa Ādāb al-Sāmī']*

## Table of Contents

Foreword .....	1
Foreword .....	5
Part A: Defining the Meaning of Superiority ( <i>Adaliyyah</i> ) .....	6
Part A1: The Excellences of the Illustrious Companions .....	11
Part A2: The Excellences of the Family of the Prophet ﷺ .....	12
Part A2: The Understanding the Difference between the Quality of Merits & Excellences and their Quantity .....	18
Part A3: Understanding the Difference between the Quality of Merits & Excellences and their Quantity .....	21
Part A4: Superiority in Sainthood ( <i>Wilāyah</i> ) .....	22
Part A5: Innate Characteristics are not the Criterion for Determining Superiority .....	22
Part A6: External Characteristics are Not the Criterion for Determining Superiority .....	22
Part A7: The Superiority of the <i>Shaykhayn</i> is not with Reference to being so in all Aspects .....	23
Part A8: The Two Groups in relation to the Issue of Superiority .....	29
Part A8: The Two Groups in relation to the Issue of Superiority .....	30
The Meaning of Superiority .....	44
Part A9: The Two Methods by which Superiority is Established .....	44
Part A10: Dispelling the Remaining Doubts Raised by the <i>Sanfa'addiyah</i> ..	47
Objections of the Detractors & their Replies .....	49
Part B: Textual Proofs establishing the Superiority of the <i>Shaykhayn</i> ..	59
Section B1: Scholarly Consensus ( <i>al-ijmā'</i> ) .....	60
Section B1: Scholarly Consensus ( <i>al-ijmā'</i> ) .....	60
Warning against the Innovators .....	75
Section B2: The Verses of the Holy Qur'ān .....	79
Section B3: The Prophetic Sayings ( <i>Aḥādīth</i> ) .....	89
Section C: Further Virtues & Excellences of the <i>Shaykhayn</i> .....	93
Section C1: The Sacrifices of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq <small>رضي الله عنه</small> ..	94
Section C2: The Status of the <i>Shaykhayn</i> in the Eyes of the Prophet ﷺ ..	103
Section C3: al-Kalam al-Bahiyī fi Tashabuh al-Ṣiddīq bi al-Nabiyy <small>رضي الله عنه</small> ..	117
APPENDIX 1 .....	125
Additional Resemblances .....	125
Bibliography.....	129

## Transliteration Key

### Foreword

The great Imām and Mujaddid (Reviver of the Religion), Shaykh Ahmad Ridā Khān رض, wrote *Munthāhā al-Taṣṣil li Mabḥath al-Taṣṣil*<sup>1</sup>, a masterpiece making abundantly clear from verses of the Holy Qur’ān, the Ahādīth and the statements of the scholars, the pre-eminent stations of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr and Sayyidunā ‘Umar رض among the Companions رض. This work spans 90 *juz’*<sup>2</sup>; however, fearing its length would be arduous on readers, the erudite Imām penned an abridgement entitled, *Maṭla’ al-Qamarayn fi Ibānat Sabqat al-‘Umarayn*<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> مُنْتَهَى التَّصْبِيحِ لِسِبْحَتِ التَّصْبِيحِ (The Apex of Detail in the Study of Superiority)

<sup>2</sup> If we assume a *juz’* to be 16 pages in length, then this masterpiece would comprise of at least 1400 pages, which after editing and paragraphing, would extend to a minimum 3,000 pages.

<sup>3</sup> مُسْطَلُ الْمَسْرِيَّ لِبَلْهَةِ الْمَسْرِيَّ (The Rising of the Two Moons in the Exposition of the Precedence of the Two Masters)

ا	Alif	A	ا	ا	ا
ب	Bā’	B	ب	ب	ب
ت	Tā’	T	ت	ت	ت
ث	Thā’	TH	ث	ث	ث
ج	Jim’	J	ج	ج	ج
ح	Hā’	H	ح	ح	ح
خ	Khā’	Kh	خ	خ	خ
د	Dāl	D	د	د	د
ذ	Dhāl	DH	ذ	ذ	ذ
ر	Rā’	R	ر	ر	ر
ن	Nūn	N	ن	ن	ن
ز	Zāy	Z	ز	ز	ز
س	Sin	S	س	س	س
ش	Shīn	SH	ش	ش	ش
ص	Ṣād	Ṣ	ص	ص	ص
ض	Ḍād	Ḍ	ض	ض	ض

The first column shows the letters as written in Arabic; the second denotes the letter names and the third column is the transliteration.

ا	ا	ا
ب	ب	ب
ت	ت	ت
ث	ث	ث
ج	ج	ج
ح	ح	ح
خ	خ	خ
د	د	د
ذ	ذ	ذ
ر	ر	ر
ن	ن	ن
ز	ز	ز
س	س	س
ش	ش	ش
ص	ص	ص
ض	ض	ض

It is believed that Imām Ahmad Ridā Khān رض was not referring to this idiom in this particular title. This is because they (Sayyidunā Abū Bakr and Sayyidunā ‘Umar رض) are both moons and the shining sun that illuminates them is the Messenger of Allāh ص.

*Al-Qamarayn* is a reference to the ḥadīth of Sayyidatunā ‘A’ishah رض who said: “I saw three moons descend in my room, and I mentioned this dream to [my father, Sayyidunā] Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq رض. When Rāstīl Allāh رض was laid to rest in my chamber, [Sayyidunā] Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq رض said, ‘This is one of the moons you saw - and he is the best of them.’” [al-Muṣṭadrak of al-Ḥākim, and in this chain: Sayyidunā Mālik ibn Anas from Sayyidunā Yahyā ibn Sa’īd al-Ansārī from Sayyidunā ‘Amrah from Sayyidatunā ‘A’ishah رض.] So naturally, the other two moons - *qamarān/qamarayn* - are Sayyidunā Abū Bakr and Sayyidunā ‘Umar رض. And they are also moons as they rest besides the Messenger of Allāh ص and the superiority of whom, shines and glows so bright that the heart of every *rājīfi* and detractor of the *Shaykhayn* is seared by it and turned to ashes. (Mawlānā Abū Ḥasan)

The great Imām mentions this masterpiece no less than eight times in his magnum opus, *al-Āṭāyā al-Nabawīyyah fī al-Fatāwā al-Rīdawīyyah*<sup>4</sup>.

Furthermore, the great Imām writes in his book *Tajallīy al-Yaqīn bi Anna Nabīyyanā Sayyid al-Mursalin*<sup>5</sup>:

"This humble servant (may Allāh forgive him) has written a detailed explanatory work on this issue [of *Afdalīyyah*], proving the pre-eminent status of the *Shaykhayn* [Sayyidunā Abū Bakr and Sayyidunā 'Umar رض] using many authoritative evidences from the Holy Qur'ān and the Ahādīth in my book *Muntahā al-Taṣṣil li Mabḥath al-Taqātil*, consisting of 90 *juz'*. However, fearing the difficulty it may cause, I abridged it into a one-volume work - *Maṭla' al-Qamarayn fī Ibānat Sabqat al-Umarayn*.<sup>6</sup>

In summary, using 69 verses of the Holy Qur'ān, 235 Ahādīth, and numerous statements of the luminary scholars of the past, Imām Ahmad Rīdā رض proves the pre-eminent rank of the two greatest Companions, namely Sayyidunā Abū Bakr and Sayyidunā 'Umar رض.

This book is itself a summary translation of *Maṭla' al-Qamarayn fī Ibānat Sabqat al-Umarayn*, consisting of three parts:

<sup>4</sup> (الهدای بالبر به فی الفاری الرضویة) (Bestowal of Prophetic Blessings in Rīdā's Edicts).

A major Fatāwa collection of rulings in Arabic, Urdu and Persian. Originally published in twelve volumes of approximately 800 large size pages each; this has been recently republished in thirty volumes approximately 800 A4 size pages each, totalling 22,000 pages containing 6847 fatāwā, which also contain 206 monographs.

<sup>5</sup> تجلی الحقین بن سبیا سید المرسلین (Radiance of Certitude that verily our Prophet is the Liege-lord of all the Messengers).

<sup>6</sup> *Al-Fatāwā al-Rīdawīyyah*, vol. 30, p. 132

Part A - Defining the meaning of superiority (*aqdālīyyah*)

Part B - Textual proofs establishing the superiority of the *Shaykhayn*

Part C - Further virtues and excellences of the *Shaykhayn*.

Accordingly, this work does not delve into the entirety of the detailed scholarly discussions of the original tract; rather, it aims to provide a simple summary of those discussions in order to make them more comprehensible for the wider lay audience.

## Part A: Defining the Meaning of Superiority (*Afḍaliyyah*)

In this part, the Imām proffers a detailed analysis of the meaning of *Afḍaliyyah* (Superiority) under 10 headings; namely:



1. The Excellences of the Blessed Companions
2. The Excellences of the Family of the Prophet
3. Understanding the Difference between the Quality of Merits & Excellences and their Quantity
4. Superiority in Sainthood
5. Innate Characteristics are not the Criterion for Determining Superiority
6. External Characteristics are not the Criterion for Determining Superiority
7. The Superiority of the *Shaykhayn* is not with reference to all aspects (*min kull al-wujūh*)
8. The Two Groups in regards to the issue of Superiority (*Tafḍīl*)
9. The Two Methodologies of Establishing Superiority
10. Dispelling the Remaining Doubts raised by the *Sanfaddiyah*.

## Part A1: The Excellences of the Illustrious Companions

Allāh chose the best of people for the companionship of His Prophets and Messengers ﷺ so that they would learn their teachings, manners and character, emulate them and transmit this inheritance to the next generation. Since the religion of Islām is to remain until the end of time, Allāh chose these individuals to be blessed with companionship of His Prophet ﷺ who would teach the next generation so that the teachings would remain until the Last Day.

It is for this reason that Sayyidunā ‘Abd-Allāh ibn Mas‘ūd ﷺ said, “Indeed Allāh looked into the hearts of the servants and found the heart of Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ to be the best of the hearts of His servants, and so He chose him ﷺ for Himself and sent him ﷺ as a Messenger. He then looked into the hearts of His servants after Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ and found the hearts of the Companions to be the best hearts of the servants. Thus, He made them representatives of His Prophet ﷺ, striving for His Dīn. So whatever the Muslims hold to be good then it is good with Allāh; and whatever the Muslims hold to be evil, it is evil according to Allāh.”<sup>7</sup>

Once Sayyidatunā ‘Ā’ishah ﷺ was sat in her house in a state of sorrow. Sayyidunā Ibn ‘Abbās ﷺ sought permission to enter. She sent a message that she was feeling apprehensive. Sayyidunā Ibn ‘Abbās ﷺ said, “I am not from those who return without meeting!” So she allowed him to enter. He said, “Glad tidings to you! Verily I heard the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ say,

“‘Ā’ishah is my wife in Jannah.’ And the status of the Prophet of Allāh is honoured in the Sight of Allāh such that He would never give him ﷺ a glowing ember of coal of the hellfire in his marriage.” She then said, “You have removed my sorrow, may Allāh remove your sorrows.”<sup>8</sup>

And in another Ḥadīth, the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ has said, “Fear Allāh regarding my Companions! Fear Allāh regarding my Companions! Fear Allāh regarding my Companions! Do not make them targets of criticism after me (my departure). Whosoever loves them, loves them because of his love for me. Whosoever hates them, hates them as a result of his hatred for me. Whosoever offends them, offends me and whosoever offends me, offends Allāh. And whosoever offends Allāh, will be punished forthwith.”<sup>9</sup>

A lover will always find the best possible people for the companionship of his beloved. Allāh the Almighty is the All-Powerful, and His love for His Beloved ﷺ is evident, therefore, the Companions of His Beloved ﷺ are undoubtedly the best of the Ummah. Thus, those who criticise the blessed Companions are in fact rejecting the Power of Allāh Almighty and His love for His Beloved ﷺ.

The disposition of people varies - some people accept guidance through love and affection, while others through might and firmness. So through Divine Wisdom, the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ had different temperaments and personalities; some became known for their gentleness while others for their strictness. Some Companions had more *Jamāl* (beauty and

<sup>8</sup> *Musnad Imām Abū Ḥanīfah*, Ḥadīth #662, p. 230.

<sup>7</sup> *Musnad Imām Aḥmad*, *Musnad ‘Abd-Allāh ibn Mas‘ūd* ﷺ, Ḥadīth #3600, vol. 1, p. 379

gentleness) in their nature while others had more *Jalāl* (strictness and firmness). Some Companions had other excellent qualities, attributes and privileges which are not found in anyone else.

Examples of such unique qualities include:

1. The first arrow to be shot in the way of Allāh was by Sayyidunā Sa‘d ibn Abī Waqqās رض.<sup>10</sup>
2. The Prophet of Allāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ honoured Sayyidunā Sa‘d ibn Abī Waqqās and Sayyidunā al-Zubayr ibn al-‘Awwām رض by saying, “The lives of my parents are for you.”<sup>11</sup>
3. Sayyidunā al-Zubayr رض is among the disciples (*Hawārī*) of the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.<sup>12</sup>
4. Sayyidunā ‘Abd-Allāh ibn ‘Abbās رض saw Sayyidunā Jibraīl رض in his original form twice in his lifetime.<sup>13</sup>
5. The Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said about Sayyidunā Usāmah ibn Zayd ibn Ḥārithah رض, “The dearest to me is him and then ‘Ali رض.<sup>14</sup>
6. In another Ḥadīth, “There is no one under the heavens as truthful as Abū Dharr رض.<sup>15</sup>
7. Sayyidunā Ubayy ibn Ka‘b رض surpassed all in the beauty of his recitation<sup>16</sup>, Sayyidunā Zayd ibn Thābit رض in acting upon the obligations<sup>17</sup>, Sayyidunā Mu‘ādh ibn Jabaal رض in the knowledge of *Halāl* and *Ḥarām*<sup>18</sup>, and Sayyidunā Abū ‘Ubaydah رض is the *Amīn* (custodian) of this Ummah.<sup>19</sup>
8. The ‘Arsh (Throne) shook on the demise of Sayyidunā Sa‘d ibn Mu‘ādh رض.<sup>20</sup>
9. Allāh Almighty sent Salām (greetings of peace) to the Mother of the Believers, Sayyidatunā Khadījah رض.<sup>21</sup>
10. Sayyidunā Abū Mūsā رض was gifted with one of the melodies of the *Āl* (family/people) of Sayyidunā Dāwūd رض.<sup>22</sup>
11. Sayyidunā Hudhayfah رض became the possessor of Prophetic secrets.<sup>23</sup>
12. The Prophet of Allāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ narrated the story of Jassāsah from Sayyidunā Tamīm al-Dārī رض with the words, “Tamīm al-Dārī has narrated to us...”<sup>24</sup>

<sup>10</sup> *Sahīḥ Muslim*, Ḥadīth #2966, p. 1586.

<sup>11</sup> *Sahīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Kitāb al-Manāqib, Ḥadīth #3720, vol. 2, p. 540.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid. Ḥadīth #2846, vol. 2, p. 267.

<sup>13</sup> *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, Kitāb al-Manāqib, Ḥadīth #3841, vol. 5, p. 448.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid. Ḥadīth #3845, vol. 5, p. 447.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid. Ḥadīth #3827, vol. 5, p. 440.

<sup>16</sup> *Sahīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Kitāb al-Manāqib, Ḥadīth #3809, vol. 2, p. 928.

<sup>17</sup> *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, Kitāb al-Manāqib, Ḥadīth #3797, vol. 5, p. 859.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid. Ḥadīth #3845, vol. 5, p. 447.

<sup>19</sup> *Sahīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Kitāb al-Manāqib, Ḥadīth #3744, vol. 2, p. 915.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid. Ḥadīth #3803, vol. 2, p. 561.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid. Ḥadīth #3820, vol. 2, p. 565.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid. Ḥadīth #5048, vol. 2, p. 416.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid. Ḥadīth #3743, vol. 2, p. 545.

<sup>24</sup> *Sahīḥ Muslim*, Ḥadīth #2942, p. 1575.

And narrating the excellences of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr from Sayyidunā 'Umar ﷺ by saying, "'Umar narrated to me ...'"<sup>25</sup>

13. When Sayyidunā Julaybīb ﷺ was martyred, the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ carried his body proclaiming, "Julaybīb is from me and I am from Julaybīb. Julaybīb is from me and I am from Julaybīb. Julaybīb is from me and I am from Julaybīb."<sup>26</sup>

May Allāh be pleased with them all and resurrect us with them and with their followers; *āmīn*.

Any form of connection with the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ is an honour in both Worlds.

Once a man saw a descendant of an Anṣārī, who was an erudite scholar of Hadith in a dream. He asked, "How has Allāh dealt with you?" He replied, "He forgave me." The man asked, "For what reason?" The descendant of the Anṣārī replied, "Because of the relationship I had with the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ." The man enquired, "Are you from his family?" He answered, "No." The man asked, "Then what is the nature of your relationship?" The Anṣārī replied, "Like a sheepdog to a shepherd."<sup>27</sup>

The Scholars have explained the similitude as being rooted in the Prophetic saying, "The closest people to me on the Day of Judgement will be the ones who sent the most salutations upon me." And the most salutations are sent by the Scholars of Ḥadīth.<sup>28</sup>

A Qurayshī slave who drank the blessed blood of the Prophet ﷺ was (by this *nisbah*) guaranteed freedom from the hellfire.<sup>29</sup>

If a slave was freed from the hellfire due to merely drinking the blessed blood then what is the status of those individuals who are formed from the very same blood as that of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, i.e. those in whose bodies flows the blessed and sacred Prophetic blood?

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## Part A2: The Excellences of the Family of the Prophet ﷺ

<sup>25</sup> *Al-Ṣawā'iq al-Muhrīqah*, p. 242.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> *Tārīkh Dimashq* (Ibn 'Asākr), vol. 30, p. 65.

<sup>28</sup> *Al-Khaṣīṣ al-Kubrā, Talkhīs al-Habīr* (Imām al-Asqalānī), Ḥadīth #17, vol. 1, p. 168, *al-Badr al-Munīr*, vol. 1, p. 464.

Some Ahādīth extolling the excellences of the Family of the Prophet ﷺ:

1. The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ said, "Indeed Fātimah ؑ protected her purity so Allāh has made Hell forbidden upon her and upon her descendants."<sup>30</sup>
2. The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ said, "My Lord promised me regarding my family that whosoever (of them) believes in the Oneness of Allāh and my message will never be punished."<sup>31</sup>
3. The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ said to his beloved daughter Fātimah ؑ, "Allāh will not punish you or your children."<sup>32</sup>
4. In another Ḥadīth, "I asked Allāh not to enter any of my family into the Hellfire and He answered my prayer."<sup>33</sup>
5. The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ once said, "I will first intercede for my family, the closest (of my family) and then those after them."<sup>34</sup>
6. Sayyidunā 'Alī ؑ narrates, "I heard the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ supplicate: 'O Allāh, they are the family of Your Prophet, so entrust the sinful (of them) to the righteous (of them), and entrust them all to me.' Then the Prophet ﷺ said to me, 'So Allāh has granted me this.' I asked, 'What did He do?' The Beloved of Allāh ﷺ said, 'Your

Lord has done this for you and will do the same for those (of your progeny) who come after you."<sup>35</sup>

The Ahādīth expounding the merits of this honourable family are innumerable. My friend, on the Day of Judgement, all lineages shall be severed; no one shall ask, 'Who is your father? Who is your grandfather?' Allāh Himself says, *'So when the Trumpet is blown, there will neither be any relationship among them that day, nor will they ask about one another.'* (23:101).

However, the lineage of the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ shall remain established. This is a lineage which shall never be severed. In the narration of Sayyidatunā Ṣafiyah ؑ after the Prophet ﷺ ordered Sayyidunā Bilāl ؑ to give the Call to Prayer (*Adhān*), he ascended the pulpit and said, "What is it with these people who believe that my lineage will be of no benefit. All lineages and ties shall be severed on the Day of Judgement except my lineage and my tie; it is intact in this world and shall remain so in the Hereafter."<sup>36</sup>

Notwithstanding this, the Holy Qur'ān and the Prophetic sayings determine for us that lineage in itself is not the distinguishing factor of virtue in the Sight of Allāh, but rather only piety and God-consciousness (*taqwā*). Allāh states in the Holy Qur'ān:

*O mankind! We have indeed created you from one man and one woman, and have made you into various nations and tribes so that you may know one another; indeed the most honourable among you, in the sight of Allāh, is the one who is the most pious among you; indeed Allāh is All-Knowing, All-Aware.* (49:13).

<sup>30</sup> *Al-Mustadrak 'alā al-Ṣahīḥayn* (Imām Ḥākim), *Kitāb al-Manāqib*, Ḥadīth #4779, vol.4, p. 135.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid*, p.132

<sup>32</sup> *Al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr*, Ḥadīth #11685, vol. 11, p. 210.

<sup>33</sup> *Kanz al-Ummāl*, *Kitāb al-Fadā'il*, Ḥadīth #34144, vol. 12, p. 44.

<sup>34</sup> *Al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr*, Ḥadīth #1355, vol. 12, p. 321.

In other words, you are all from one man and one woman; these tribes and lineages were created for you to know each other better, and keep ties with relations. However, in the Sight of Allāh, the most honourable and praiseworthy is the one who is the most righteous.

The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ has said, "The most honourable of the people is the most righteous from them."<sup>37</sup>

He ﷺ has also said, "Know that you are not better than any red or black person except by virtue of piety."<sup>38</sup>

He ﷺ has also said, "All Muslims are brothers [of one another]. No one is better than the other but for piety."<sup>39</sup>

In another Ḥadīth, "Indeed Allāh does not look at your appearances or your wealth, but He looks into your hearts and your actions."<sup>40</sup>

Moreover, it is in another Ḥadīth, "O People! Your Lord is One and your father is one. Listen! No Arab is better than a non-Arab, nor is a black person better than a red person, except through piety. The best among you in the Sight of Allāh is the one with the most piety."<sup>41</sup>

In another narration, "Allāh will not ask about your lineages or your ties, but He will ask about your actions. Indeed the best

among you in the Sight of Allāh is the one who is the most pious."<sup>42</sup>

Moreover, "My household assume they are closest to me, but this is not the case. Indeed the closest person to me is the most pious, whoever he is, and wherever he may be."<sup>43</sup>

If lineage was the determinant factor of someone's status then the status of Sayyidatunā Fātimah ؓ, Sayyidatunā Zaynab ؓ, Sayyidatunā Ruqayyah ؓ and Sayyidatunā Umm Kulthūm ؓ ought to be higher than that of Sayyidunā 'Alī ؑ. Additionally, the status of the grandsons of the Messenger of Allāh ؓ, Sayyidunā Imām al-Hasan and Sayyidunā Imām al-Husayn ؓ, should also be higher than that of their father but this is rejected by the consensus of both the Ahl al-Sunnah and the Taqīlīs<sup>45</sup>.

Indeed the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ has granted Sayyidunā 'Alī ؑ superiority to his two beloved grandsons, confirming that lineage is not the critical factor in determining someone's status.

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has said, "These two sons of mine, al-Hasan and al-Ḥusayn (ؑ) are the leaders of the youth of Jannah, and their father is superior to them."<sup>46</sup>

<sup>37</sup> *Kanz al-'Ummāl*, Kitāb al-Akhlāq, Ḥadīth #5623, vol. 3, p. 43.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid*, Ḥadīth #5629, vol. 3, p. 41.

<sup>39</sup> *Al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr*, vol. 4, p. 25.

<sup>40</sup> *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Kitāb al-Birr, wa al-ṣilah wa al-Ādāb, p. 1387.

<sup>41</sup> *Musnad Imām Ahmad* Ibn Ḥanbal, Ḥadīth #17315, vol. 6, p. 122.

<sup>42</sup> *Kanz al-'Ummāl*, Kitāb al-Akhlāq, Ḥadīth #5623, vol. 3, p. 43.

<sup>43</sup> *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Kitāb al-Dhikr wa al-Du'a, Ḥadīth #2699, p. 1447.

<sup>44</sup> *Al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr*, Ḥadīth #241, vol. 20, p. 120.

<sup>45</sup> A heterodox sect that believe in the superiority of Sayyidunā 'Alī ؑ over the *Shaykhayn* – Sayyidunā Abū Bakr and Sayyidunā 'Umar ؓ.

<sup>46</sup> *Kanz al-'Ummāl*, Ḥadīth #34242, vol. 12, p. 52.7

However, the natural love is greater for close family members than it is for others, but this is not what is being contested. The essence of honour and dignity is in piety and God-consciousness. It is for this reason the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ has said, "O 'Alī! Fātīmah is more beloved to me, but you are more honoured in my eyes."<sup>47</sup>

The fatherhood of the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ is not only physical but also spiritual; and the latter bond is more important and eminent than the former. All Muslims are like children of the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ; nurtured by his spiritual blessings. The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ has said, "I am to you like a father, teaching you."<sup>48</sup>

It is in a rare (*shādh*) recitation of the verse 33:6, "The Prophet is closer to the Muslims than their own lives, and his wives are their mothers (and he is their father)."<sup>49</sup>

The scholars say that from the tekonyms (*kunā*) of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ is *Abū al-Mu'minīn* (The Father of the Believers).

When a person is delivered from the darkness of desires and steps into the expansive land of piety, and after this 'spiritual birth' feeds on the Dhikr of Allāh, leaving the food of worldly love, purifies his blood by nourishing it with the pure milk of Shari'ah, then his spiritual lineage becomes stronger; and he becomes a beloved son of the Muhammadan upbringing (*tarbiyyah Muhammadiyyah*). This lineage is more eminent and precious than the physical lineage. It is for this reason a

scholar's honour is greater than the honour of a lay person of prophetic descent (*Sayyid*)<sup>50</sup>.

It is narrated in a Hadith, "The *Āl* (family) of Muhammad (ﷺ) is every righteous person (*Āl Muḥammad Kullu Taqiyū*)."<sup>51</sup> Therefore, no Companions are deprived from being part of the Prophetic family; they are all from the Prophet's (ﷺ) family.

Imām al-Ārif Shaykh Shihāb al-Dīn al-Suharwardī رحمه الله says in *Riām al-Hudā wa 'Aqīdāt Arbāb al-Taqā*, "Relating Sayyidunā 'Alī رضي الله عنه to the Prophet ﷺ through Companionship is more complete (*Akmal*) than through his kinship..."

<sup>47</sup> *Al-Mu'jam al-Awsat*, Hadith #7675, vol. 5, p. 380.

<sup>48</sup> *Sunan Abū Dāwūd*, Kitāb al-Tahārah, Hadith #7, p37.

<sup>49</sup> *Al-Durr al-Manthūr*, vol. 6, p. 500.

<sup>50</sup> i.e. a non-Scholar

<sup>51</sup> *Al-Mu'jam al-Awsat*, Hadith#3332, vol.2, p. 295.

## Part A3: Understanding the Difference between the Quality of Merits & Excellences and their Quantity

Certain virtues and excellences are greater than a thousand other excellences. Illustrative examples from the Ahādīth include:

1. To stand for an hour in the ranks of a Muslim army is more rewarding than a thousand days spent in Qiyām (standing in prayer); and to spend one night watching over (the Muslim ranks) is more rewarding than a thousand days spent in Qiyām and fasting.<sup>52</sup>
2. To tie a horse at the boundary of the disbeliever's territory (at the time of combat) is more rewarding than an entire month of fasting and nights spent in vigil worship.<sup>53</sup>
3. To serve a scholar even for a moment is more rewarding than a thousand days of (personal) struggle.
4. An hour's study of an 'Alīm (scholar), even while reclining in comfort, is more rewarding than an 'ābid's 70 years of worship.<sup>54</sup>
5. One fast in the month of Ramaḍān is more rewarding than fasting the entirety of any of the Sacred Months.<sup>55</sup>
6. To fast in the first ten days of Dhū al-Hijjah is more rewarding than fasting an entire year. To fast on a Thursday, Friday or Saturday in the sacred months is more rewarding than 120 years of worship. A supererogatory (*nafl*) act of worship in Ramaḍān is rewarded equally to a compulsory (*fard*) act of worship (in any other month) and a Fard act of worship (in Ramaḍān) is multiplied at least 70 times.<sup>56</sup>
7. One Rak'ah of prayer in Masjid al-Aqṣā is equal to 5,000 Rak'āt; in al-Masjid al-Nabawī it is equal to 50,000; in al-Masjid al-Harām it is equal to a 100,000 and in the Holy Ka'bah it is equal to 2,000,000 Rak'āt.<sup>57</sup>
8. One fast of Ramaḍān in al-Madīnah al-Munawwarah, is equal to 1,000 months of fasts outside the blessed city, and one Jumu'ah prayer in the sacred city is equal to 1,000 Jumu'ah prayers outside the blessed city.<sup>58</sup>
9. Performing prayer after performing Siwāk multiplies the reward by 27 times.<sup>59</sup>

and fasting one day in the Sacred Months is more rewarding than fasting the entirety of any other month.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> *Kanz al-'Ummāl*, Kitāb al-Jihād, Hadīth 10506, vol 4, p. 122.

<sup>53</sup> *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Kitāb al-Amārah, Hadīth #1913, p. 1059.

<sup>54</sup> *Jāmī' al-Āḥadīth*, Ḥarf Ṣīn, Hadīth #12947, vol. 7, p. 207.

<sup>55</sup> Months of Ḥaḍāt (Sanctity)– Dhū'l Qa'dah, Dhū'l Hijjah, Muḥarram and Rajab [As mentioned in the verse: "Indeed the number of months before Allāh is twelve - in the Book of Allāh - since the day He created the heavens and the

10. A Ṣahābī spending a handful in the path of Allāh carries more reward than a non-Ṣahābī spending gold equivalent to the size of Mount Uhud.<sup>61</sup>

11. A man accepted Islām and partook in a battle. He fought in the battle until he was martyred. The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ said, "His actions are few but his reward is great."<sup>62</sup>

12. It is narrated that Sayyidunā 'Umar ﷺ has said, "By Allāh! Abū Bakr's one day and night is superior to the entire life of 'Umar."<sup>63</sup>

13. The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ once said, "The Archangel Jibrīl ﷺ just came to me and I asked, 'O Jibrīl! Mention some of the excellences of 'Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb.' So he replied, 'Even if I was to spend the amount of time, that Prophet Nūh ﷺ spent in his community,<sup>64</sup> I would still not be able to completely describe or relay the excellences of 'Umar; and indeed 'Umar is but a good deed from the good deeds of Abū Bakr (ﷺ).'<sup>65</sup>

Using such types of Aḥadīth is valid in extolling excellences and virtues (*fāḍā'i*).<sup>66</sup>

While some continue to advance, others are instructed to continue their journey and also return to the creation; this is called, 'Sayr min-Allāh' (Journey 'from' Allāh). From this stems the different spiritual chains (*Salāṣī*). Even though this is a separate virtue ('Sayr min-Allāh'), it does not mean that their 'journey in Allāh' is superior to that of the others.

Has it not been observed that the caliphs of Sayyidunā 'Alī (ﷺ); Imām al-Husayn and Khwajā Hasan al-Baṣrī (ﷺ) were conferred with *Khilāfah*, whereas no spiritual chain has begun from Imām al-Ḥasan (ﷺ), even though the latter's closeness to Allāh is, without a shadow of doubt, greater than that of Khwajā Hasan al-Baṣrī. In addition to this, in the light of Aḥadīth, Imām al-Ḥasan's (ﷺ) status is also proven to be higher than that of Imām al-Husayn (ﷺ).

This is taken from our master, the Gnostic, Shaykh Abū al-Ḥusayn Alḥmad-e-Nūrī (ﷺ).

<sup>61</sup> Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Hadīth #6383, p. 1258. In a variant version, the words are "...or even half of a handful..."

<sup>62</sup> Kanz al-'Ummāl, Kitāb al-Jihād, Hadīth #10637, vol. 4, p. 132.

<sup>63</sup> Kanz al-'Ummāl, Bāb Fadā'il al-Ṣahābah, Hadīth #35610, vol. 12, p. 493.

<sup>64</sup> 950 years. (Sūrah al-Ankabūt – 29:14)

<sup>65</sup> Musnād Abū Ya'qūb, Musnād 'Amrāb Ibn Yāsir (ﷺ), Hadīth #1600, vol. 2, p. 119.

<sup>66</sup> Kitāb al-Adhkār – Imām al-Nawawī

## Part A4: Superiority in Sainthood (*Wilāyah*)

To turn away from creation and to turn to the Creator is called 'Sayr ilā-Allāh' (Journey 'to' Allāh). The apex of this journey is called, 'Fanā fi'llāh' (Annihilation 'in' Allāh). All the Awliyā are equal in this aspect. When everything other than Allāh perishes from one's thoughts and he steps further in *Fanā fi'llāh* then this is called, 'Sayr fi'llāh' (Journey 'in' Allāh). From this point the relative closeness to Allāh they have achieved is differentiated; the more a person advances along this path, the closer he is to Allāh.

## Part A5: Innate Characteristics are not the Criterion for Determining Superiority

Wisdom, courage, generosity and other special traits are not distinguishing factors of virtue and pre-eminence. This because these traits may also be found in non-Muslims. The leadership of Kisrā, the courage and prowess of Rustam and the generosity of al-Ḥātim are well-known. If we were to take these as the yardstick to measure superiority, it would render some disbelievers superior to some Companions; something that is patently absurd.

## Part A6: External Characteristics are Not the Criterion for Determining Superiority

Undoubtedly, being related to an honourable person, particularly the Prophets, is an immense virtue. But this virtue is an external virtue and not a personal one. Therefore, the wrongful acts of a family member will have no effect in itself on the status of a person nor will the excellences of his family elevate his rank.

It is for this reason that till today, no one has regarded Sayyidunā 'Uthmān's<sup>66</sup> status higher than that of the *Shaykhayn* despite the fact that the wives of the latter were not from the blessed family of the Prophet<sup>67</sup> and Sayyidunā 'Uthmān<sup>68</sup> was blessed with two daughters of the Prophet<sup>69</sup> being given to him in marriage.

Therefore, establishing an individual's status (exclusively) by reference to who his wife and children may be, is incorrect. However, when other superior virtues are present, then this

quality can be (and will be) used as a supplementary virtue but not as an independent virtue of excellence.

The wives of Sayyidunā Nūh<sup>70</sup> and his son, Kan'ān were all disbelievers but this did not tarnish his status.

The children and wives of Sayyidunā Ya'qūb<sup>71</sup> were all righteous but they are not given superiority over Sayyidunā Nūh<sup>72</sup>.

## Part A7: The Superiority of the *Shaykhayn* is not with Reference to being so in all Aspects

The status of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr and Sayyidunā 'Umar<sup>73</sup> is not higher than the status of Sayyidunā 'Alī<sup>74</sup> in all aspects (*Min Kull al-Wujūh*) because there are numerous qualities of Sayyidunā 'Alī<sup>75</sup> not found in any other Companion.

Sayyidunā 'Alī<sup>76</sup> was a reflection of the verse, "And We exalted for you your remembrance" (94:4) to such a degree that it is virtually impossible to gather all of his excellences. However, mentioning the beloved is to bring one closer to the beloved and a means of obtaining Divine blessings.

Those who believe that the *Shaykhayn* have a higher status than Sayyidunā 'Alī<sup>77</sup> in all aspects (*Min Jamī' al-wujūh*) should attempt to reconcile their claim with the following:

With respect to whom did the Prophet of Allāh<sup>78</sup> say, "People are from different trees, and he and I are from one tree"<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> *Kanz al-'Ummāl*, Kitāb al-Fadā'il, Hadith #32943, vol. 11, p. 279.

Indeed he is Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ, the branch from the Prophetic tree and the trunk of the Prophetic family.

Whom did the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ send with an army; and when that beloved left his eyesight, did the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, in love, raise his hands and supplicate, "O Allāh! Do not let me pass from this world till I see him"<sup>68</sup> Indeed he is Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ, the beloved of Allāh and His Prophet ﷺ.

With respect to whom did the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ say, "Allāh has placed the children of every Prophet in their loins, and placed my family in his back"<sup>69</sup> Indeed he is Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ, the father of the great Imāms رض.

Who was given the Prophetic glad-tiding, "You are the distributor of the Garden and the Hellfire"<sup>70</sup> Indeed he is Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ, the leader of good, the dispeller of evil.

Who was the one instructed by the one who ascended the Heavens during the night of al-Mi'raj (the Ascension) رض to climb on his shoulders and destroy the idols that were on the roof of the Holy Ka'bah? And when he climbed upon the blessed shoulders he said, "If I wanted to I could have touched the boundaries of the Heavens"<sup>71</sup> Indeed he is Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ, the one stationed on a lofty rank.

Who was the one, when not granted permission to partake in the Battle of Tabūk, said, "O Prophet of Allāh! Are you leaving me behind with the women and children?" The Prophet of Allāh رض said, "Are you not pleased that in my eyes your station is like

the station of Prophet Hārūn رض with Prophet Mūsā رض; save that there is no Prophet after me"<sup>72</sup> Indeed he is Sayyidunā 'Alī رض, the brother of Sayyidunā Aḥmad رض and his caliph.

Who is the guardian of all Muslims by the narration, "He is the guardian (*Mawlā*) of those for whom I am a guardian. O Allāh! Befriend those who befriend him, and make him Your enemy who is his enemy"<sup>73</sup> Indeed he is Sayyidunā 'Alī رض, the leader and guardian of the Muslims.

Who is he, for whom the Prophet of Allāh رض said, on the eve of the conquest of Khaybar, "Tomorrow (morning) I will give this standard to that person at whose hands we will gain victory. He loves Allāh and His Prophet رض and he is the beloved of Allāh and His Prophet رض." The following morning, the Prophet رض called him and gave him the standard<sup>74</sup> Indeed he is Sayyidunā 'Alī رض, the protector of Islām, the Lion of Allāh.

Who was the one for whom the Prophet of Allāh رض made it permissible to enter the Masjid in the state of *Janābah* (major ritual impurity)?<sup>75</sup> Indeed he is Sayyidunā 'Alī رض, the purified and the purifier.

Who was the one that when the Prophet of Allāh رض made the Companions brothers of each other, came and said, "You have not made me a brother of anyone." The Prophet رض said, "You are my brother in this world and the Hereafter"<sup>76</sup> Indeed he is Sayyidunā 'Alī رض, the brilliant moon of the Banū Hāshim.

<sup>68</sup> *Jāmi' al-Tirmidhī*, Kitāb al-Manaqib, vol. 5, p. 412.

<sup>69</sup> *Kanz al-'Ummāl*, Kitāb al-Fadā'il, Hadith #32889, vol. 11, p. 275.

<sup>70</sup> *Kanz al-'Ummāl*, Ḥadīth #36471, vol. 13, p. 66.

<sup>71</sup> *Al-Musnād* of Imām Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal, Ḥadīth #644, vol. 1, p. 183

<sup>72</sup> *Sahīh al-Bukhārī*, Maghāzī, Ghazwah Tabūk, Hadith #4416, vol. 3, p. 144.

<sup>73</sup> *Sunan al-Nasā'i*, Kitāb al-Khaṣā'īṣ, Ḥadīth #8464, vol. 5, p. 130.

<sup>74</sup> *Sahīh al-Bukhārī*, Kitāb al-Jihād

<sup>75</sup> *Jāmi' al-Tirmidhī*, al-Manaqib 'An al-Rasūl رض, Ḥadīth #3748, vol. 5, p. 408.

Who was the one who excelled all the Companions in giving verdicts and judgements, to such a degree that Sayyidunā 'Umar sought protection from those difficult cases in which he was not present<sup>77</sup> and about whom Sayyidunā 'Umar ﷺ said many a time, "If he was not present then 'Umar would have perished"<sup>78</sup> Indeed he is Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ, the possessor of the soundest acumen.

Who was the one who manifested his might by plucking the gate of Khaybar from the walls of the fortress and using it as a shield.<sup>79</sup> Indeed he is, none other than Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ, the great valiant warrior.

Who was the one who fought with such courage and strength in the battle of Uhud, that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The only sword is the sword of *Dhū al-Fiqr*, the only youth is 'Alī the oft-attacker (*Lā Sayfa illā Dhū al-Fiqr wa Lā Fata illā 'Alī al-Karrār*)."<sup>80</sup> Indeed he is Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ, the Lion of Allāh, the strength of the Prophet ﷺ.

Who is the one who has been made the distributor of the water of the fount al-Kawthar, thereby quenching the thirst of Muslims on the Day of Judgement.<sup>81</sup> Indeed he is Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ, the cloud of generosity, the sea of benevolence.

Who is the one who will be given control of the 'Bridge' (Sīrāt), such that without his consent no one will be allowed to cross it,<sup>82</sup> the cloud of generosity, the sea of benevolence.

Then this station was granted to Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ. All the *Aqṭāb* (The Poles) are under his command. After him, the affairs of the world were conferred to the Awliyā through him. It is for this reason that the people of need turn towards them and ask for their help. Then this great station was given to our master and guide, the beloved of *Dhū al-Jalāl* (Almighty), the leader of all

it.<sup>83</sup> Yes indeed, he is Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ, the guide on the straight path.

Sayyidunā Ibn 'Abbās ﷺ says, "Sayyidunā 'Alī possessed 18 qualities that are unshared with anyone else."<sup>84</sup>

Sayyidunā 'Umar ﷺ once said, "'Alī has been given three (exclusive) qualities. Possessing any of them is dearer to me than possessing red camels." Sayyidunā 'Umar ﷺ was asked about those qualities, so he replied, "(i) The Prophet ﷺ gave his beloved daughter to him in marriage. (ii) He is allowed to stay in the masjid in a state that I am not permitted. (iii) He was granted the standard of Khaybar."<sup>85</sup>

Imām Ahmad ibn Muḥammad al-Khaṭīb al-Qastalānī writes in *al-Mawāhib*, "...thus he ﷺ is the Final Prophet but his status was already known to the previous Prophets and Messengers. He ﷺ is the treasure of secrets; through his mediation the affairs of the universe are fulfilled. He ﷺ is in control of all the affairs and all goodness returns to him ﷺ. When he ﷺ intends to do something then there is no one who can go against his decision."<sup>86</sup>

<sup>77</sup> *Kanz al-'Ummāl*, Kitāb al-'ilm, Hadith #29495, vol. 10, p. 133.  
<sup>78</sup> *Al-İstī'āb Fī Ma'rīfat al-Asħāb*, p. 339.  
<sup>79</sup> *Al-Riyād al-Nadrāh*, vol. 1, p. 265.  
<sup>80</sup> *Al-Muṣannaf* - Ibn Abī Shaybah, Hadith #32812, vol. 12, p 85.  
<sup>81</sup> *Sīrat* Ibn Hishām, Ghazwah Uhud, vol. 2, p. 87.  
<sup>82</sup> *Al-Muṣannaf* - Ibn Abī Shaybah, Hadith #36, vol. 7, p 500.  
<sup>83</sup> *Al-Mawāhib al-Ladūnīyyah*, al-Maqṣad al-Ṣābi', vol. 2, p. 545.

the *Aqtāb* and *Abdāl*, the one who personified the inner secrets of the Holy Qur'ān, the Qiblah of our hearts, the secret of secrets, the light of lights, the master of Jinn and Humans, the *Ghawth*, the *Qutb*, the Reviver of Religion, Muhyiddin Abū Muhammad 'Abd al-Qādir al-Ḥasanī al-Ḥusaynī al-Jīlānī رض.

Mullā 'Alī al-Qārī in *Nuzhat al-Khāṭir*, Imām al-Shaṭṭānawī in *Bahjat al-Asrār*, Imām al-Yāfā'ī in his books and Shaykh 'Abd al-Ḥaqq al-Muḥaddith al-Dīhlawī in *Akhbār al-Akhyār* write that the great Ghawth once said, "When someone seeks my mediation during hardships, his hardships shall be removed. When someone calls upon me in times of need, I will come to his assistance. Whosoever prays two cycles of prayer after the Maghrib prayer, thereafter sending blessings and salutations upon the Prophet ﷺ, takes 11 steps in the direction of 'Iraq (Baghdad), mentioning my name (at each step), then Allāh shall fulfill his desires."<sup>86</sup>

*You have said the truth O the beloved son of al-Muṣṭafā رض! Come to our rescue! Come to our rescue! O my master! Come to our rescue!*

## Part A8: The Two Groups in relation to the Issue of Superiority<sup>87</sup>

Initially there were only two groups in relation the issue of superiority:

- (i) The Ahl al-Sunnah, who believe the *Shaykhayn* to be the most superior of all the Companions;
- (ii) The Tafḍilis who believe Sayyidunā 'Alī رض to be the most superior.

However, over time these two split into four groups. From the Ahl al-Sunnah there came to be individuals who believe the *Shaykhayn* to be the most superior in all aspects (*min kull al-wujūh*) and this erroneous belief has been discussed in Part A7.

From the Tafḍilis branched a group who acknowledge the order of Khilāfah, but believe that Sayyidunā Abū Bakr رض is superior

<sup>87</sup> The Imām states the four held opinions regarding superiority. Initially there were two:

1. The 'Ahl al-Sunnah'- that Absolute Superiority (*Afdal Muṭlaq*) rests with Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq رض  
 2. 'Ahl al-Taḍīliyyah' (Rāfiḍis or Shī'ah)- that the Absolute Superiority rests with Sayyidunā 'Alī رض.

Subdivisions that have arisen from the initial two:

3. The 'Extreme' branched from the Ahl al-Sunnah- that the 'Best in All Aspects' (*Afdal Min Kull al-Wujūh*) is Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq رض.  
 4. The 'Sanfaḍqiyah' that branched from the Taḍīliyyah- that the caliphate of the first three is correct, and that they had Partial Excellences which made them the best only in One Aspect (*Afdal Min Waṭḥihi*). However, the Absolute Superiority lies with Sayyidunā 'Alī رض.

The word Sanfaḍqiyah is a new word coined by the Imām himself, as these people call themselves 'Sunnis' but in actual fact their beliefs are like the 'Rāfiḍis' (Shī'ah)

in only one aspect, whereas absolute superiority remains with Sayyidunā 'Alī رض.

This last opinion was taken by some to mean that they should be regarded as being from the Ahl al-Sunnah and not from the Tafđiliyyah, though their stance is in actual fact like the stance of the Tafđilis.

For this reason we first need to define the meaning of Superiority, then rebut the false notions of this new sect with overwhelming proofs. Thereafter, Allāh Willing, the evidence in support of the absolute superiority of the *Shaykhayn* will be presented and the opponents will have nothing to resort to.

## The Meaning of Superiority

Lexically, *Fadl* means 'additional' and *Afḍal* means 'having more of something relative to others'. Sometimes we are able to leave the superiority unqualified, while at other times we are required to qualify this superiority with reference to a particular attribute. This can be illustrated as follows:

Take for example, an expert horse rider and an unparalleled erudite scholar. When we are asked who is the best, of course, the answer would be the scholar. We do not need to specify this superiority. However, when we want to express the superiority of the horse rider, we would need to specify the superiority, "The Horse rider is superior to the scholar in *horse riding*." Without this qualification, it would mean, "The horse rider is superior to the scholar" – a statement which is patently incorrect.

The reason is because excellences are relative in their nobility. So when we are asked about the absolute superiority (which is

inherent when no qualification is made) between two who possess different qualities and excellences, we mean the one who is the noblest of them. If and when we do determine the other to be superior, it will be qualified by reference to a particular aspect in which they are superior and not unrestrictedly. By saying that a person has partial (*juz'ī*) excellence we mean he is superior only with reference to that particular attribute. This is called '*Afḍal bi al-Taqyid*', superior with specification.

Absolute superiority needs to be understood precisely. What does it in fact mean?

The people of this world define it in worldly terms. They believe, the most superior is the one who possesses the most wealth, as mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān about Fir'awn (Pharaoh), "And Fir'awn said, 'O my people! Is not the kingdom of Egypt for me, and these rivers that flow beneath me? So do you not see that I am better than him, for he is lowly, and he does not seem to talk plainly?'" (43:51-52)

In another place, Allāh mentions about the people of Makkah, "And they said, 'Why was the Qur'ān not sent down upon some chieftain of these two towns (Makkah and Tā'if)?'" (43:31)

The arrogant consider that superiority lies with material and physical status and the nobility of one's origin, even if it is contrary to his own claim - "Iblis said, 'I am better than him; You made me from fire, and You have created him from clay.'" (38:76) We, the Ahl al-Sunnah, believe superiority lies with the one who is the most honoured, closest and respected in the Sight of Allāh. He says, "And the end is only towards your Lord." (53:42)

If a person possesses a multitude of excellences but which do not make him closer to Allāh, they are futile. Have you not understood the excellence of knowledge in the light of the Holy Qur'ān? "Proclaim, 'Are the knowledgeable and the ignorant equal?'" (39:9). Despite this, the knowledge of Iblīs, teacher of the angels for many years, did not make him closer to Allāh. A person may spend his whole life in the worship of Allāh yet another person may perform a single deed that draws him closer to Allāh than the first person – the Ahl al-Sunnah would assert that absolute superiority rests with the second person. Allāh says, "The Night of Destiny is better than a thousand months." (97:3).

The quantity of reward (i.e. an increase of heavenly rewards like an increase in food, clothes, palaces in Jannah, ḥūr of Jannah) can never be the determinant factor of absolute superiority.

**Evidence One:** We ask people with sound intellect whether such things (as mentioned above i.e. heavenly food, clothes etc.) have any reality in increasing one's status? These things are only the attraction of the imperfect. The 'Men of Allāh' actually consider worship to attain Jannah and its bounties as 'Hidden Polytheism' (*Shirk Khaft*).

It is stated in the Torah, "Who is more unjust than the one who worships Me to attain a place in Paradise and freedom from Hell? If I was not to create Paradise and Hell, will I not be worthy of worship?"

The Sūfis say that one will find many 'Abds (slaves of) *al-Rahmān*, many 'Abds of *al-Rāhīm* and many 'Abds of *al-Razzāq*, but the 'Abds of Allāh are rare.

The verse "Therefore worship Me alone" (29:56), negates not only the 'shirk' of worshipping other than Him but also the 'shirk' of purpose (*maqṣad*). In other words, "Worship Me alone and desire only Me through My worship." Those whose hearts are filled with thoughts of anyone or anything other than Allāh, are not worthy of entering the Divine Presence, "Those who turns towards anyone besides Us are not from Us."<sup>88</sup>

The state of the Companions, especially the state of the four Rightly-Guided Caliphs, was far greater than merely having their hearts inclined towards the attainment of such imperfect objectives. Nay, infact their sole objective and their only intent was to attain Divine Closeness and Pleasure. Allāh mentions about the state of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq رض, "Who gives his wealth in order to be pure. And no one has done a favour to him, for which he should be compensated. He desires only to please his Lord, the Supreme." (92:18-20).

**Evidence Two:** The great Muḥaddith, Shaykh Muhammād Tāhir [al-Fattāni] al-Gujarātī writes in his masterpiece, *Majma' Bihār al-Anwār*, "An increase of reward does not necessarily establish absolute superiority. It is quite possible that the *maṣdūl* (superseded) has greater reward."<sup>89</sup> Allāmah Ibn Ḥajar Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad al-Makkī writes the same.<sup>90</sup> Thus if the determinant factor of superiority is (having) an abundance of heavenly reward, then how would it be rationally possible that the superseded (*maṣdūl*) be able to attain it aswell.

<sup>88</sup> Inām Shihāb al-Dīn Maḥmūd al-Ālūsī narrates a statement from the Sūfis in his *Tafsīr*, "Those who turn towards anyone besides Allāh is a polytheist". (*Rūh al-Ma'āni*, Sūrah Yūsuf, verse 111, vol. 3, p. 162).

<sup>89</sup> *Majma' Bihār al-Anwār*, *Fasl fi al-Ṣahābah*, vol. 5, p. 738.

**Evidence Three:** It is the consensus of the Ahl al-Sunnah that the blessed Companions are the most superior of the Ummah. If superiority is to be determined with reference to the amount of reward (*thawāb*) accumulated, then what is the meaning of the Ḥadīth in which the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has said, "A day shall come when the reward for the one practising (Islām), will be equal to that of 50 practising men." He ﷺ was asked, "O Messenger of Allāh! (Would this be the reward of 50 practising men) from them or from us?" The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ replied, "No, but from you."<sup>91</sup>

This Ḥadīth has been cited by the scholars as evidence of the fact that an accumulated *thawāb* (reward) does not in itself mean an increase in excellence and superiority.

**Evidence Four:** One should ask whether Divine Closeness is better or more of the aforesaid heavenly rewards? Imagine two servants of a king. One is given "only" a thousand gold coins but given a place near the throne while the other is given many thousands of gold coins but a place further away. Who is better? Thus having more reward can not be the determinant factor of superiority.

**Evidence Five:** There is a hierarchy of ranking even among the Angels. "Should I not inform you about the most superior (*afṣīl*) Angel? He is Jibrīl (ﷺ)."<sup>92</sup> The books of 'Aqā'īd mention about the superiority of men and Angels and it is in a Ḥadīth Qudsi, that Allāh has said, "My believing servant is more beloved to Me than some of My Angels."<sup>93</sup>

What meaning of superiority shall we take in this instance? The Angels are not as such rewarded for their actions. Therefore we have to assert that 'superiority' is by reference to *Qurb* (closeness) to Allāh; furthermore, it is only this *Qurb* to Allāh that establishes the rank of an individual whether from the angels or humans<sup>94</sup>.

**Evidence Six:** The scholars have used the verse, "Indeed the most honourable among you, in the Sight of Allāh, is the one who is the most pious among you" (49:13) and the Ḥadīth, "Abū Bakr and 'Umar are the best of those who have passed and all those who are to come, and they are the best of those in the heavens and earth besides the Prophets and Messengers"<sup>95</sup> to prove the eminent status of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq ﷺ. Such evidence has always been used to prove his precedence above all the Companions.

Undoubtedly, being 'the most honoured in the Sight of Allāh' and being 'the closest to Allāh' are synonymous. Thus, 'the most honourable in the Sight of Allāh' must be the one who is 'the closest to Allāh' and not the one who has been given a greater share of heavenly rewards. Moreover, being the most superior of the previous and the latter, of the earthly and celestial realms, after all the Prophets and Messengers cannot be as a result of a mere abundance of such heavenly rewards.

Consequently, it proves that the scholars have pronounced the *Shaykhayn* as 'the most superior' due to their closeness to Allāh and not determinatively on account of their rewards; otherwise this would entail a flaw in the rationale. This is because the

<sup>91</sup> 'Iāmī' *al-Tirmidhī*, Kitāb al-Tafsīr Min Sūrah al-Mā'idah, Ḥadīth #3069, vol. 5, p. 42.

<sup>92</sup> *Al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr*, Bāb al-'Ayn, vol. 11, p. 129.

<sup>93</sup> *Al-Mu'jam al-Awsat*, Ḥadīth #6634, vol. 5, p. 79.

<sup>94</sup> As we see the Prophets and Messengers being the foremost, followed by the Archangels, then the Rightly-Guided Caliphs et seq.

<sup>95</sup> *Jamā' al-Jawāmī*, Ḥarf al-Hamzah, Ḥadīth #124, vol. 1, p. 39.

claim (*da'wā*) otherwise would be that Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Siddīq ﷺ has accumulated the most rewards, yet the evidence (*dalīl*) is that he is the most honourable in the Sight of Allāh and therefore this would necessitate the addition of an extra proposition, 'the most honourable must be given the greatest rewards.'

However, the scholars have completed their evidences on this conclusion (that Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Siddīq ﷺ is the most superior due to his closeness to Allāh) and no one has ever added such a proposition.<sup>96</sup>

**Evidence Seven:** The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ mentioned his own superiority to all other Prophets using the words, "I have been given superiority over the other Prophets in six respects: I have been given words which are concise but comprehensive in meaning (*Jawāmi' al-Kalim*), I have been helped by awe (in the hearts of enemies), spoils (of war) have been made lawful for me, the earth has been made for me clean and a place of worship, I have been sent to all of mankind and the chain of Prophethood is completed with me."<sup>97</sup>

And in a variant Ḥadīth, the words, "I have preserved the intercession for my followers till the Day of judgement,"<sup>98</sup> have been narrated.

It is evident that the superiority of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ to the other Prophets is due to his closeness to Allāh and not due

to an increase of heavenly food, clothes, goblets, trays, ewers, cups, well-matched companions and palaces.

Similarly, Sayyidunā 'Abd-Allāh Ibn 'Abbās ﷺ has said, "Allāh has preferred (*Faḍḍala*) Sayyidunā Muhammad ﷺ over all the Prophets and over the dwellers of the heavens." They said: "O Ibn 'Abbās, how did He prefer him to the dwellers of the heavens (*ahl al-samā'*)?" He replied, "Allāh Most High said: 'And the one among them (dwellers of the heavens) who says, "I am a god beside Allāh" - We shall reward him with hell; this is how We punish the unjust.' (21:29) but He said, 'We have indeed, for your sake (O Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ), bestowed a clear victory. So that Allāh may forgive, for your sake, the sins of those before you and those after you...' (48:1-2)" The people asked, "And how did He prefer him ﷺ over the other Prophets?" He replied: "Allāh Most High says, 'And We sent every Noble Messenger with the same language as his people, so that he may clearly explain to them' (14:4), but Allāh causes to stray whoever He wishes. As for the Beloved ﷺ, He states: 'And (O Prophet) We have not sent you except with a Prophethood that covers the entire mankind.' (34:28)."<sup>99</sup>

Thus, now by the testimony of two witnesses; the sacred text and the intellect, it has been proven that superiority is due to one's closeness and honour in the Divine Presence and not due to the heavenly rewards.

**Evidence Eight:** If it was the belief of the Ahl al-Sunnah that Mawīlā 'Alī ﷺ is superior (over the *Shaykhayn*) and his closeness and honour is greater and that the *Shaykhayn* only surpass him in an accumulation of rewards, then all the proofs and evidences aforementioned and those that have been

<sup>96</sup> The *intiqāl al-da'wā* would be thus: al-Siddīq is al-Atqā (most God-conscious) and every Atqā is *Akram 'indAllāh* (most honoured in the sight of Allāh) and every *Akram 'indAllāh* has greater reward; therefore, Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ﷺ has greater reward. This is *Qiyās Murakkab* and hence void and unacceptable. (see Evidence 8)

<sup>97</sup> *Sahīh Muslim*, Bāb al-Masājid, Ḥadīth #523, p. 266.

<sup>98</sup> *Al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr*, Ḥadīth #6674, vol. 7, p. 154.

transmitted and circulated amongst the *Akābir* and *Asāghir* scholars of the saved sect (the Ahl al-Sunnah) would all be turned on their heads at once; those for whom they have proven an abundance of reward, would now be established as the most honoured, and those they have established as the most honoured, would now be given the only distinctive feature of having accumulated the most rewards!

Hypothetically, (if the above was to be accepted) then the evidence and the consequential claim (*intāj al-da'wā*) would be thus:

al-*Siddīq* is 'al-*Atqā*' (the most God-conscious) and every *Atqā* is 'Akram 'indAllāh' (most honoured in the sight of Allāh) and every 'Akram 'indAllāh' has greater reward; therefore, Sayyidunā Abū Bakr رض has greater reward. Now the result would be that Sayyidunā Abū Bakr رض has been withdrawn from his being the most honoured, despite the fact this was what was claimed and by virtue of the second proposition (every 'Akram 'indAllāh' has greater reward), 'Akram' is defined as possession of greater reward, and now Mawlā 'Ali رض who is regarded (by the opposition) as 'Akram' is now only 'Akram' in reference to an abundance of rewards.

This is *Qiyās Murakkab* (a complex syllogism) and hence void and unacceptable.

Allāh forbid that such absurdities ever occur at the hands of even a novice from the Ahl al-Sunnah!

**Evidence Nine:** This statement (that Mawlā 'Ali رض is 'Akram' in the context of having a greater number of heavenly rewards) is not even accepted by the *Tafđiliyyah*.

It is important in a *Nizād*' (a matter of controversy) that there exists a difference of opinion in the *Mā fīhi al-Tanāzu'* (the subject matter of dispute).

So for example, if we establish kingship of the East for Zayd and the opposition establish sultanate of the West for 'Amr, then where is there any disagreement, controversy or opposition in this?

A disagreement will only arise if we establish one undivided rule of Zayd, while at the very same time the opposition establish it for 'Amr.

If we were to ask the *Tafđiliyyah* if the inferred meaning of their deeming Mawlā 'Ali رض as 'Afḍal' is an 'increase of reward, bounties and benefit,' they would dismiss this absurd interpretation and riposte: Our deeming Mawlā 'Ali رض as *Afḍal* is in the context and meaning of his lofty station, his pre-eminence and his closeness and honour in the Sight of Allāh. If the Ahl al-Sunnah agreed with this stance of theirs, then why does the controversy and dispute which has continued for a thousand years or more still exist!

**Evidence Ten:** The issue is that they (the *Sanfaddiyyah*) must have read the statements of our scholars regarding 'an increase of reward' and tried to understand the statements for themselves. The question is that if they refer to the supposed statement of Shaykh 'Abd al-Haqq al-Dihlawī in *Takmīl al-īmān* then why do they not read the explicit statements in *al-Sawā'iq al-Muhrīqah* and *Majma' al-Bihār* in refutation of 'abundance of reward' being the determinant factor of *Afḍalīyyah*?

It is in *Sharh al-Maqāṣid*, "The meaning of *Aṣḍāliyyah* (superiority) is the honour in the Sight of Allāh and more rewards."<sup>100</sup>

Shaykh al-Munāwī writes in *al-Taysīr* under the Ḥadīth, "The most righteous of all Muslims are Sayyidunā Abū Bakr and Sayyidunā 'Umar رض." In other words, they are the loftiest of all Muslims in terms of merit and the loftiest of them, after the Prophets, in terms of their status."<sup>101</sup>

Shaykh 'Abd al-Haqq al-Dīlawī, the great Muḥaddith, writes in *Āṣī'at al-Lām'āt*, "Sayyidunā Abū Bakr and Sayyidunā 'Umar رض are the highest (in rank) and most superior to all. They were the foremost in respect of all religious and worldly matters. Both of them are the viziers and the confidants of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ."<sup>102</sup>

It is in *al-Ṣawā'iq*, "Then it is necessary to believe and acknowledge that the most honourable and supreme from the entire creation in the Sight of Allāh after the Prophets and Messengers, and the most worthy of the Prophetic Caliphate, was Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq رض. We know after the demise of the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ there was no one on the face of the earth who had this attribute besides him. Then after him, it was Sayyidunā 'Umar رض..."<sup>103</sup>

If you prefer, read *Sharh al-Mawāqif*, "The meaning of *Aṣḍāliyyah* which we have proven, is an abundance of reward and honour in the Sight of Allāh (*karāmah 'ind Allāh*)."<sup>104</sup>

The upshot of everything is that when a slave implements the teachings and the injunctions of Allāh and avoids His prohibitions, then the Ever-Merciful out of His Grace, blesses the slave with His closeness and honours him by granting him an increase of His Bounty; further bestowing him with the delights of Paradise.

Allāh says, "And this is the Paradise which is bequeathed to you, because of your deeds." (43:72)

He says, "And prostrate, and become close to Us." (96:19) In a Ḥadīth Qudṣī, Allāh states, "...and My slave continuously draws closer to Me by performing *Mawāfi* (supererogatory deeds) until I love him..."<sup>105</sup>

The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ has said, "The servant is nearest to his Lord when he is in prostration."<sup>106</sup>

In another narration, "You should stand in prayer during the night, for it is the way of the righteous people who came before you, and it will bring you closer to your Lord, expiate for sins, prevent sin, and expel diseases from the body."<sup>107</sup>

The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ has said, "Through prayer, a righteous person obtains closeness to Allāh."<sup>108</sup>

Imām al-Munāwī writes under the commentary of the above Ḥadīth, "The righteous people gain closeness to Allāh, by seeking His closeness through the prayers."<sup>109</sup>

<sup>100</sup> *Sharh al-Maqāṣid*, Al-Faṣl al-Rābi', vol. 3, p. 523.

<sup>101</sup> *Fayd al-Qadr*, Ḥadīth #4985, vol. 4, p. 251.

<sup>102</sup> *Āṣī'at al-Lām'āt*, Kitāb al-Fitan, vol. 4, p. 650.

<sup>103</sup> *Al-Ṣawā'iq al-Muhrīqah*, Bāb Khātamah Fī al-Umūr al-Muhibimah, p. 248.

<sup>104</sup> *Sharh al-Mawāqif*, al-Marṣad al-Rābi'

<sup>105</sup> *Saḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Kitāb al-Riqāq, Ḥadīth #6502, vol. 4, p. 248.

<sup>106</sup> *Saḥīḥ Muslim*, Kitāb al-Ṣalāh, Ḥadīth #215, p. 250.

<sup>107</sup> *Sunan al-Tirmidī*, Kitāb al-Dā'wāt, Ḥadīth #3560, vol. 5, p. 322.

<sup>108</sup> *Bahr al-Fawā'id*, p. 159

<sup>109</sup> *Fayd al-Qadr*, Ḥadīth #5182, vol. 4, p. 325.

In another Ḥadīth, "Seek the Divine Closeness by malice towards the sinful (i.e. the act), and meet them with frowns upon your faces, and seek the Pleasure of Allāh by being displeased with them, and seek His closeness by distancing yourself away from them."<sup>110</sup>

Such verses of the Holy Qur'ān and Prophetic sayings make it clear that virtuous deeds not only provide a place in Paradise but are also a means of obtaining closeness to Allāh. The verse, 'Indeed the most honourable among you, in the Sight of Allāh, is the one who is the most pious among you' (49:13), is a sufficient proof that good deeds lead to honour in the presence of Allāh, and *thawāb* is the secondary reward of those virtuous deeds. To limit the reward by defining it as the bounties and pleasures of Paradise is incorrect.

Mullā 'Alī al-Qārī writes, "To limit 'reward' to the pleasures and delights of Paradise only, is incorrect as the ultimate happiness (in Paradise) is in the remembrance of Allāh, expressing gratitude on His bounties, His proximity and His gnosis, the apex of which is seeing Him, compared to which all other delights and pleasures will be immaterial and insignificant."<sup>111</sup>

An increase in Divine Closeness and an increase in heavenly delights are not equal. If Zayd was rewarded by being given the heavenly delights and 'Amr by being granted closeness to Allāh, then ask yourself who has been given a greater reward?

## Conclusion

In conclusion, the belief of the Ahl al-Sunnah is that after the Prophets and Messengers, no one can be equal to the closeness, honour, status, respect and proximity to Allāh that the Four Caliphs رض possess; irrespective of his level of knowledge, deeds, sainthood or whether he is from the Prophetic Family or from the Companions. Moreover, the *Shaykhayn* have precedence over the *Khatanayn* (sons-in-law; Sayyidunā 'Uthmān and Sayyidunā 'Alī رض) without in any way demeaning the honour of the latter two, Allāh forbid.

The belief of the *Tafḍiliyyah* is to the contrary; giving Sayyidunā 'Alī رض superiority.

By the grace of Allāh, this concrete work and wise approach - in which the doubt of the doubters will have no room for persistence - is only a drop from the vast ocean of knowledge of the scholars. But perhaps, such an explanation, clarification and work may not be found elsewhere, 'This is a grace of Allāh upon us and upon mankind, but most men are not thankful' (12:38).

*O person! Hold to it tightly as it is very beneficial. There is no might and power except by Allāh the All-Powerful.*

<sup>110</sup> *Jam' al-lawāmi'*, Qism al-Aqwāl, Ḥadīth #10528, vol. 4, p. 102.

<sup>111</sup> *Sharh al-Fiqh al-Akbar*, p. 132.

## Part A9: The Two Methods by which Superiority is Established

There are two ways by which someone's superiority may be proven:

1. From the absolutely clear statements of the narrational sources (*nusūṣ shar'īyyah*) - that mention superiority referenced to a particular individual. This is the soundest way and no one has a right to oppose the *nusūṣ shar'īyyah*.

2. By reasoning and deduction.

Both ways prove the superiority of the *Shaykhayn* .

With regards to the second way, the foundations of determining precedence and superiority are of two bases:

1. *Mā Fīhi al-Taqāfiḍul* - is that in which there is relative superiority i.e. that both the superior and the superseded both possess the attribute but one (the superior) exceeds the other (the superseded) in regards to it.

2. *Mā Bihī al-Afḍalīyyah* - is that by which superiority is established in *Mā Fīhi al-Taqāfiḍul*. This is exclusive to the superior and the superseded does not have any share of this whatsoever.

Take the example of a sharp knife and a blunt knife, the *Mā Fīhi al-Taqāfiḍul* is the quality of 'cutting' - the sharp knife cuts very well (thus superior) while the blunt knife does not cut as well (thus being superseded). The *Mā Bihī al-Afḍalīyyah* is the sharpness and the blunt knife has no part of this.

Both the *Ahl al-Sunnah* and the *Tafsīlīyyah* gave precedence to one person over the other. The different conclusion stems from

the *Tafsīlīyyah*'s disregard for the Verses and the Ahadīth (*nusūṣ shar'īyyah*), while the *Ahl al-Sunnah* refer to the Qur'ānic Verses, Ahadīth and the Scholarly verdicts - and this is where the split originates from.

When we look into these *nusūṣ shar'ī*, we find the verse of the Holy Qur'ān, "Indeed the most honourable among you, in the Sight of Allāh, is one who is **the most pious** among you" (49:13): this is decisive text that gives us the determining factor - *Taqwā* (piety), and this has also been highlighted in many Ahadīth. Being the **most pious** is the *Mā Bihī al-Afḍalīyyah*. The superiority of the *Shaykhayn* is established by them being the most pious, the criterion laid out in the *nusūṣ shar'ī*.

In contrast the *Tafsīlīyyah* in following their whims consider at times exclusivity to certain specific qualities as the bedrock for establishing *fāḍl kullī* (absolute precedence) while at other times consider fame and the abundance of excellences, nobility of lineage and eminence of pedigree; eminence of the person the individual married; the individual being the founder of spiritual chains etc as the key determinant factor for establishing *fāḍl kullī*.

However, by the grace of Allāh, we have refuted such notions in the previous parts.<sup>112</sup>

If we ponder deeply, then the origin of all of these different factors is really one thing, the degree perfection of the strength of one's *īmān* (*kamāl quwwat-e-īmān*). This attribute is hidden and its beauty is placed in a believer's heart.

<sup>112</sup> These things may be deemed as 'partial excellences' but cannot determine the 'Absolute Excellence' (or 'Absolute Superiority').

It is only by this that a human being obtains closeness to Allāh. This is a means of distinction in terms of honour, nobility and respect. Thus, when the intensity of this attribute (*Imān*) increases, it also increases piety - the ability to do good and the strength to abstain from evil. This is the essence of piety.

By virtue of this strength, a person will surpass others in good deeds, and when he surpasses all in good deeds, then surely he will be regarded as the one who gave the most benefit to Islām, and thus such an individual is decreed to be the closest Companion of the Prophet of Islām ﷺ. All the other factors are inter-connected and they all stem from and return to this source - the strength of *Imān*. Nothing else can be the determinant factor.

The different factors mentioned in the Ahādīth in order to differentiate superiority and the manner in which they all revolve around this unique factor are mentioned in Part C, by the Will of Allāh.

In this part, the great *Imām* provides five admonitions against the *Sanfādīyyah*'s deliberate muddling of the definition of *Aṣfālīyyah*.

**Admonition 1**

[Against the claim that the superiority of the *Shaykhayn* exists only by virtue of the benefit they gave to the Muslims and Islām and/or by the spread of Islām in their respective reigns.]

The disagreement is not regarding specific individual (*juz'*) virtues and excellences. This is because, in this aspect, the Ahl al-Sunnah also believe there are some specific individual excellences of the *Shaykhayn* which would give them superiority over Sayyidunā 'Ali ؑ and vice versa. Furthermore, other Companions also had certain, individual excellences that would, by this yardstick, make them superior to all of the Four Caliphs. These specific individual excellences will result in 'Conditional Superiority' (*bi al-Taqyid*, mentioned in A8 above).

However, the point of discussion is in relation to the unconditional absolute superiority (*kulli*). When reference is made to the most excellent without specifying or qualifying with reference to a particular attribute or excellence, then undoubtedly, it is the blessed *Shaykhayn*, Sayyidunā Abū Bakr and Sayyidunā 'Umar ؓ, who are *afḍal*.

## Admonition 2

### Objections of the Detractors & their Replies

The bewildering state of affairs of the *Sanfaddiyah* is such that their hearts are not open to accept nor softened by the Verses, Ahadith and the *ljmā'* of the scholars, "...and whomever He wills, to send astray, He makes his breast narrow and constricted as if he were engaged in ascent to the heavens." (6:125).

The name 'Sunnī' is so dear to them that they do not desire to publicly disavow it! And yet behind closed doors, they begin to interpret the matter at hand with statements from their own whims, and then claim such interpretations to be of Sunni origin. However, by the grace of Allāh, by the might and power given to the scholars, truth and falsehood have been distinguished<sup>113</sup>.

**Objection 1**  
The order of superiority in the school of the Ahl al-Sunnah is that the best from the entire creation is our Master Sayyidunā Muhammad ﷺ, then the other Prophets, then the Angels of close proximity then the *Shaykhayn* (Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddiq and Sayyidunā 'Umar ﷺ) then the *Khatanayn* (the two sons-in-law, Sayyidunā 'Uthmān and Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ) then the rest of the Companions.

The aforementioned hierarchy of superiority must be and is determined by reference to one distinguishing factor and not two (or more).

<sup>113</sup> The Imām then refutes those who believe the *Shaykhayn* to be the most superior regarding Caliphate and Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ to be most superior with respect to Sainthood. They argue that as the *Shaykhayn* were the first to be given caliphate and Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ succeeded them, they are superior in this regard; however, because in the spiritual dominion, all the spiritual chains stem from Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ and not the *Shaykhayn*, therefore, he (Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ) is most superior.

The Imām says that the above claim is baseless. If it was the case then why is it that in every Friday sermon (*khuṭbah*) the words, "The best human after the Prophets, Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddiq ﷺ" are expressed, and why is it that the Ahadith declare the the *Shaykhayn* to be, after the Prophets and Messengers, the leaders of the first and last and the best from those of the heavens and earth? Why is it that Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ himself expressed his view using the words, "If the Prophet ﷺ chose them for our religious affairs (i.e. Salah) then why shouldn't we choose them for our worldly affairs (i.e. Caliphate)?" [*Tārīkh al-Khulāfā*; Imām al-Suyūṭī, P. 6]

Now it is asked: When we say that the Beloved of Allāh ﷺ is the best of all creation, then does this have another meaning other than believing that the closeness to Allāh, status, honour and virtue of the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ is greater than that of any other? The same is the situation with the other Prophets in distinction to the Angels, and the Angels in distinction to the Companions. In the same way when we say the Prophets excel even the Angels of the close proximity and the Angels of close

proximity excel the Companions, we do not stray from the above reasoning why they do so. Thus, when we say the *Shaykhayn* are superior to *Sayyidunā 'Alī* رض, this must be the import of the very same meaning; otherwise, the methodology would be corrupted and the order spoiled.

If they consider the 'distinguishing factor of superiority' to be the amount of rewards and other 'innovated' factors, then as mentioned earlier in the book, we have to consider the same factor of superiority for the entire hierarchy. However, using the "amount of rewards" as the distinguishing factor would be fallacious as the Angels do not receive reward per se (so the amount of reward cannot be the distinguishing factor). Nor can we say that the Angels of the Divine Throne are superior to others because of the benefit they give to Islām (thus negating the factor to be the amount of benefit conferred to Islām and the Muslims). And the factor of 'Caliphate' cannot at all be used for those above and below the Four Blessed Caliphs رض then how can these 'innovated' factors be acceptable?

It is astonishing that they begin by using "the Closeness to Allāh" as the determinant factor and also employ this to those under *Sayyidunā 'Alī* رض; yet, when it comes to the *Shaykhayn* they change the factor of superiority to be something other than this, overlooking what comes before and after!

If this was the creed of the Ahl al-Sunnah (that *Sayyidunā 'Alī* رض is more superior to the *Shaykhayn*), then why has no single Sunnī scholar established the above hierarchy such that the most superior after the Beloved Messenger are the Prophets and Messenger, then *Sayyidunā 'Alī* رض and then the *Shaykhayn*!?

They (the detractors) have never read the books of Aḥadīth and therefore begin to interpret the issue on a fictional basis. If they

have not read any Aḥadīth then let them be patient, as we will mention to them many Aḥadīth, statements of the Companions, Tabī'īn, and even the statements of the Imāms of the Prophetic Family, and let them read these impartially and judge their own interpretations in light of these statements.

Let us consider just one Ḥadīth for now: "Abū Bakr and 'Umar are the best of all those who came before and those who are to come after (*al-Awwalīn wa al-Ākhirīn*), and they are the best of all the dwellers of the heavens and earth save the Prophets and Messengers."<sup>114</sup>

#### Objection 2

The Ahl al-Sunnah say, "The best Companion is *Sayyidunā Abū Bakr*, then *Sayyidunā 'Umar*, then *Sayyidunā 'Uthmān*, then *Sayyidunā 'Alī*, then the rest of the Blessed-Ten<sup>115</sup> and then the rest of the Companions."

To those who say this hierarchy of superiority is only based by reference to the factor of Caliphate, we ask "Were any of the remaining Blessed-Ten and other Companions Caliphs?" How will we judge their superiority?

<sup>114</sup> *Jam' al-Jawāmi'*, Ḥarf al-Ḥamzah, Ḥadīth #124, vol.1, p.39.

<sup>115</sup> (Including the Four Rightly-Guided Caliphs and) *Sayyidunā Talhā*, *Sayyidunā al-Zubayr ibn al-'Awwām*, *Sayyidunā 'Abd al-Rahmān ibn 'Awf*, *Sayyidunā Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqās*, *Sayyidunā Sa'īd ibn Zayd*, *Sayyidunā Abū Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrāḥ* رض. [*Abū Dāwūd* and *al-Tirmidī*]

### Objection 3

The *Sanfaddiyah* argue that the Ahl al-Sunnah refer to the superiority of the *Shaykhayn* in one aspect and in another aspect give superiority to Sayyiduna 'Alī. If this is the case then why have the scholars of the Ahl al-Sunnah always taken only one aspect into consideration?

You may have read and heard innumerable times, "The best from mankind after the Prophets is Sayyiduna Abū Bakr, then Sayyiduna 'Umar, then Sayyiduna 'Uthmān and then Sayyiduna 'Alī" but you will never find, not even in a handful of books, that the scholars of the Ahl al-Sunnah took any other aspect than closeness to Allāh into consideration and said, "The best from mankind after the Prophets is Sayyiduna 'Alī, then Sayyiduna Abū Bakr, then Sayyiduna 'Umar".

How is it possible that the scholars have totally overlooked the other aspect and have always referred to Sayyiduna Abū Bakr as the best of all the Companions, rather the best of the entire creation after the Prophets and Messengers?

If Sayyiduna 'Alī was closer to Allāh than the *Shaykhayn*, then surely the scholars of the Ahl al-Sunnah should (and would) have given us the hierarchy of superiority in accordance with this.

### Objection 4

The Prophet ﷺ, Sayyiduna 'Alī, the Ahl al-Bayt and other Companions ﷺ have explicitly mentioned the absolute superiority of the *Shaykhayn*. But why do the opponents not say it explicitly that the best from all Companions are the *Shaykhayn*. However, whenever they make such statements,

they do so by adding certain conditions and restrictions (For example, "The *Shaykhayn* are superior because they have conquered many cities"). Their attaching these conditions is concrete proof that their beliefs are not in conformity with those that have been laid out in the Holy Qur'ān, Aḥadīth and the Consensus (*ijmā*); otherwise, like the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, his blessed family and Companions, who mentioned their absolute superiority without any restrictions, would have done the same.<sup>116</sup>

We ask them "Who is the best?" They will answer saying, "All Companions are excellent." No one denies this. But if it means that they are all equal then this statement contradicts their own stance and beliefs. They are from neither this side nor that! The Ahl al-Sunnah will say that they have gone against the Holy Qur'ān, Aḥadīth and the Consensus (*ijmā*). The *Taqdīyah* will also disavow themselves from them (the *Sanfaddiyah*).

And if their statement means that "He is excellent and so is he and only Allāh knows who is superior from among them", then by the grace of Allāh they have proven their ignorance in this matter. If this is the case then the cure for their ignorance is quite easy, "So O people! Ask the people of knowledge if you do not know." (16:43). But instead they become provocative and begin to reject the statements of the 'People of Knowledge'. *SubhānAllāh!* If they do not know who is superior then why do they argue with those who do know?

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<sup>116</sup> i.e. state their superiority with reference to certain conditions and certain aspects.

Some of the *Sanfaddiyyah* say, "These are not our own words<sup>117</sup> but rather statements of our predecessors." made such claims in absolute private gatherings. Are they so audacious to lay such accusations on the great predecessors and the pre-eminent *Awliyā'* who were luminaries of the Ahl al-Sunnah? Our great predecessors are those whose light of virtue and knowledge until this day kindles and grants guidance to the entire *Ummah*. Such is their inspiration that merely kissing the dust of the entrance gate of their abodes would instantly make one a true adherent of the Ahl al-Sunnah. As far fetched as it is, let us assume for nothing more than argument's sake, that the great predecessors did make such statements and were not made aware of the most superior, then it should be known that one must follow knowledge not ignorance. There are many who do know! Look at the above Qur'ānic verse that orders us to ask those who know. It does not say, 'If any of your predecessors do not know then you should also follow them (in ignorance) and there is no need to seek knowledge'.

Now, if according to the statement of the *Sanfaddiyyah*, the predecessors were unaware of it then it becomes incumbent upon them to ask those who are aware. From those who had knowledge and who explicitly mentioned the unconditional superiority of the *Shaykhayn* was Sayyidunā 'Alī رض. Yet, they still find cause to disagree?

If they say that the *Shaykhayn* and Sayyiduna 'Alī رض are equally 'absolutely superior' then this is an absolute contradiction. You can only believe one to be superior to the other. If they believe this to be the *Shaykhayn* then they have agreed upon our belief. Then why do they argue with the Ahl al-Sunnah and seek to

<sup>117</sup> i.e. the statement "that Allāh knows who is superior and we should not indulge in such things"

tarnish our beliefs? We have asserted many times that both excellences, such that they cannot be found in others, have great excellences, however, 'Absolute Superiority' lies with Sayyidunā Abū Bakr رض. If the *Sanfaddiyyah* say that 'absolute superiority' is with Sayyidunā 'Alī رض then they have unmasked their own reality that they are *not* from the Ahl al-Sunnah.

Then why don't they clearly state that the *Shaykhayn* have many excellences but the 'Absolute-superiority' lies with Sayyidunā 'Alī رض? We will then unsheathe swords of solid proofs and evidences to which sound minds are obliged to bow their heads in submission and to accept. Yes! This will happen, but first we demand them to bring forth their evidences and ask (firstly) what is the distinguishing factor on which they base their opinion? (Secondly) they will have to prove that those who possess such a quality will indeed be the closest to Allāh and (thirdly) that the excellences of the *Shaykhayn* cannot interfere with the superiority of Sayyidunā 'Alī رض.

*Perhaps all the above discussions which have been made by this weak beggar (Imām Ahmad Ridā) are unprecedented and unfound elsewhere. And all praise belongs to Allāh.*

### Admonition 3

Some think that when the Ahl al-Sunnah refer to the superiority of the *Shaykhayn* in terms of their closeness to Allāh then this superiority is in all aspect (*min kulli al-wujūh*). However, this statement has already been explicitly rebutted above. Their misunderstanding is from failing to perceive the difference in the meaning of 'absolute (*mutlaq*) superiority' and 'superiority in all aspects (*min jamī'i al-wujūh*)'.

## Admonition 4

Some think that by ascribing superiority to the *Shaykhayn* over Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ debases the rank of the latter - Allāh forbid! This is their misunderstanding and it is to slander the Muslims without reason.

My friend! We have been commanded to recognise the status of those who are virtuous and treat them according to their respective statuses. We consider the status of Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ after all the Prophets, Messengers and the first three Caliphs, to be most superior to the rest of the Ahl al-Bayt, Companions, Angels, mankind and Jinn. This is because this is how it is in the sight of Allāh. This is not disrespect. Disrespect would arise if we ascribed superiority to anyone else over Sayyidunā 'Alī other than the first three Caliphs ﷺ in the same way they belittle the superiority of the *Shaykhayn* over Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ.

If disrespect is regarded as consequential when ascribing superiority to one over another whose virtues and merits are mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān or the Ahādīth, then what about those who consider the status of the other Prophets to be lower than our Prophet ﷺ? Their virtues and excellences have also been mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān and the Ahādīth. If, despite the mention of the virtues and excellences of the other Prophets in the Qur'ān and the Ahādīth, we consider their ranks to be lower than that of our Beloved Prophet ﷺ, then does not this entail disrespect of the other Prophets? Yet, it is unequivocal that disrespect of any Prophet is undoubtedly blasphemy (*Kufr*)!

My friend! That is why our luminaries state that the rank of the *Shaykhayn* is superior to that of the *Khatānayn*; without in any way demeaning or denigrating the rank of the latter.

Some of the *Sanfādīyyah* contend that each of the Four Caliphs are superior and that to distinguish between them is none of their concern; how can our shallow intellects come to know their individual ranks?

The reply to this is that we have no choice but to follow the verdicts of the Great Imāms who stipulated that the *Shaykhayn* are the most superior. If someone was to argue that - Allāh forbid! - The great Imāms were unaware of their ranks, then have the Imāms given verdicts without any knowledge or basis? The excellences and superiority of the *Shaykhayn* have been mentioned by Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ himself through multi-chain narrations (*Tawātur*); was he also unaware of the relative ranks?

We ask these individuals whether or not they believe our Prophet ﷺ to be the leader of all Prophets? If not, then let them ask the scholars for the verdict. How is it that they are unable to perceive the status of the Four Caliphs but acknowledge the status of the Ahl al-Bayt without any hesitation? They will answer by saying that they have not come to understand the status of the Ahl al-Bayt of their own accord, but rather this has been prescribed in the Holy Qur'ān and the Ahādīth. Now we come to an agreement. Who is asking to use his rationale to understand the statuses of the Four Caliphs ﷺ? Just read and understand the Qur'ān and the Ahādīth!



## Part B: Textual Proofs establishing the Superiority of the *Shaykhayn*

After defining the meaning of superiority, İmām Ahmād Rīdā رض proves the superiority of the *Shaykhayn* from textual proofs of the Qur'ān and Sunnah (*nusūṣ*) and the Consensus (*ijmā'*) of the scholars. He divided this part into several sections. However the exact number of sections is unknown. Only three sections of the original manuscript have been found:

Section 1 on **al-İjmā'** (Scholarly Consensus)

Section 2 on the **Verses of the Holy Qur'ān**

Section 3 on the **Aḥadīth**

A summary of each section is as follows:

## Section B1: Scholarly Consensus (*al-Ijmā'*)

In this section Imām Aḥmad Rīdā proves that the superiority of the *Shaykhayn* above all the Companions is a consensual issue.<sup>118</sup>

Sayyidunā ‘Abd-Allāh Ibn ‘Umar *ra* says, “During the lifetime of the Prophet ~~ﷺ~~, we (the Companions) never regarded anyone equal to Sayyidunā Abū Bakr, then Sayyidunā ‘Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, then Sayyidunā ‘Uthmān Ibn ‘Affān *ra*.<sup>119</sup>”<sup>119</sup>

Sayyidunā Abū Hurayrah *ra* states, “We (the Companions) used to say many times, “The best of this Community after the Prophet of Allāh ~~ﷺ~~ is Sayyidunā Abū Bakr then Sayyidunā ‘Umar *ra*.<sup>120</sup>”<sup>120</sup>

Imām al-Shāfi‘ī and other great Imāms have also mentioned the consensus of the Companions and the Tābi‘īn. Similarly the existence of consensus in this matter has been explicitly mentioned in the general books of *Uṣūl* and has been included in the beliefs of the Ahl al-Sunnah without any disagreement.

Imām Abū Zakariyyā al-Nawawī *ra* cites in the commentary of *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, “The Ahl al-Sunnah have all unanimously agreed [ṣaḥīḥ] that the best (of all Companions) is Sayyidunā Abū Bakr then Sayyidunā ‘Umar *ra*.<sup>122</sup><sup>122</sup>

He further writes in his *Tahdhīb al-Asmā' wa al-Lughāt*, “The Ahl al-Sunnah have all agreed that the absolute superior *Al-firdaus* is Sayyidunā Abū Bakr then Sayyidunā ‘Umar *ra*.<sup>123</sup><sup>123</sup>

Imām Maymūn Ibn Mahrān was once asked, ‘Who is superior, the *Shaykhayn* or ‘Alī *ra*? On the very hearing of this question his body shook so violently, that the staff he was holding fell out of his hands on to the ground and he then said, “I never thought that I would live to see the day when people shall consider someone equal to Sayyidunā Abū Bakr and Sayyidunā ‘Umar *ra*.<sup>124</sup><sup>124</sup>

Imām Aḥmad Ibn Muḥammad al-Qaṣṭalānī writes in his commentary of *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, “The best human after the Prophets is Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq *ra*. The predecessors [ṣaḥāfa] have all agreed upon him being the best of this Ummah. Imām Shāfi‘ī and others have mentioned the unanimity of the Companions and the Tābi‘īn on this issue.”<sup>125</sup><sup>125</sup>

It is apparent from these narrations that the superiority of the *Shaykhayn* was a matter on which consensus existed during the time of the Companions and the Tābi‘īn; that their ears were unresponsive to anyone who believed otherwise, and that their bodies would tremble by the mere questioning of this.

<sup>118</sup> A matter upon which consensus (of the righteous scholars) exists.

<sup>119</sup> *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Kitāb Faḍā'il al-Ashāh, Hadīth #3655.

<sup>120</sup> *Sūnā Abū Dā’ūd*, Kitāb al-Sunnah #4628

<sup>121</sup> *Tarīkh al-Khulqā* (Imām al-Suyūtī), p.26.

<sup>122</sup> *Sharh al-Nawawī*, Kitāb Faḍā'il al-Ṣaḥābah, vol. 15, p. 148.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

<sup>124</sup> *Iḥṣād al-Ṣārī Sharh Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Bāb Faḍl Abī Bakr Ba’d al-Nabīyy, Hadīth #3655, vol. 6, p. 430.

<sup>125</sup> *Al-Mawāhib al-Ladunniyyah*, al-Maqṣad al-Sābi’, vol. 2, p. 545.

'Allāmah Fāsī in the commentary of *Dalā'il al-Khayrāt* says, "There is consensus (*Ijmā'*) on the superiority of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr رض over all other Companions."<sup>126</sup>

It is mentioned in *Bustān (al-Ārijīn)* of Faqīh Abū al-Layth, "Muhammad Ibn al-Faḍl says, "They (the scholars) have agreed upon the fact that the best of this Ummah after the Prophet ﷺ is Sayyidunā Abū Bakr then Sayyidunā 'Umar رض."<sup>127</sup>

Imām Ibn Ḥajar al-Makki al-Haytamī writes in *al-Zawājir*, "The Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah have unanimously agreed upon the superiority of the ten blessed Companions who were given glad tidings of *Jannah* by the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ, and the best from among them is Sayyidunā Abū Bakr then Sayyidunā 'Umar رض"."<sup>128</sup>

It is in *Kifāyat al-'Awām (fī mā yajibu 'alayhim min al-Kalām)* of Shaykh Muḥammad al-Fudālī al-Azharī, "It is necessary to believe that the best time (*Qarn*) was the time of the Companions then the time of the Tābi'īn and also (it is necessary to believe) that the best of all the Companions was Sayyidunā Abū Bakr, then Sayyidunā 'Umar, then Sayyidunā 'Uthmān then Sayyidunā 'Alī رض in this order."<sup>129</sup>

Allāmah Bājūrī writes in his commentary of *Kifāyat al-'Awām* entitled, "Tahqīq al-Maqām", "The statement 'the best of all the Companions was Sayyidunā Abū Bakr' is the opinion agreed-upon by the Ahl al-Sunnah."<sup>130</sup>

Sayyidi al-Shaykh al-'Allāmah 'Abd al-Haqq al-Dīhlawī, may Allāh sanctify his secret, writes in *Takmīl al-Imān*, "The Allāh's position of the Imāms is that this a matter on which unanimous position exists."<sup>131</sup>

It is cited in *Qaṣīdah Bad' al-Amālī* of Shaykh 'Alī ibn 'Uthmān al-Farghānī al-Hanafī, "Sayyidunā Abū Bakr رض has explicit superiority over all Companions without a shadow of doubt."<sup>132</sup>

After mentioning many more textual evidences on the consensus, Imām Ahmad Ridā رض writes, "I am astounded by that individual who goes against the consensus of the Companions, the Tābi'īn and all the Ahl al-Sunnah, yet he still regards himself a Sunnī! My friend! Believing in all the fundamental beliefs will make one a Muslim, and disregarding any one of them will make a person a disbeliever, similarly believing all the fundamental teachings of the Ahl al-Sunnah will make a person Sunnī and disregarding any one of them will make him not a Sunnī but an innovator."

Shaykh 'Abū Shākūr al-Sālimī writes, "Some of their (*Tafsīlīs*) statements are innovative (*Bid'ah*), not infidelity (*Kufr*). From those statements is their statement that Sayyidunā 'Alī رض is superior to Sayyidunā Abū Bakr, Sayyidunā 'Umar and Sayyidunā 'Uthmān رض".<sup>133</sup>

It is in 'Aqā' id al-Bazzawī, "From the Rāfi'dīs, the least extreme are the Zaydiyyah. Though they do not accuse the Companions of disbelief and believe that the *Shaykhayn* were the true Imāms

<sup>126</sup> *Maṭālī' al-Masarrat*, p. 147.

<sup>127</sup> *Bustān al-Ārijīn*, Chapter 126, p. 129.

<sup>128</sup> *Al-Zawājir 'an Iqtirāf al-Kabā'ir*, vol. 3, p. 334.

<sup>129</sup> *Kifāyat al-'Awām*, p. 185.

<sup>130</sup> *Tahqīq al-Maqām Sharḥ Kifāyat al-'Awām*, p. 185.

but they hold the belief that Sayyidunā ‘Alī is superior to the *Shaykhayn*.<sup>134</sup>

It is in *Ghunyaṭ al-Ṭālibīn*, known to be written by Sayyidunā ‘Alī al-Ghawth al-Āzam Shaykh ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jilānī, “(From the beliefs of the Rawāfiḍ is) regarding Sayyidunā ‘Alī to be the most superior of all the Companions.”<sup>134</sup>

It is in the commentary of *Qaṣīdah Baḍ’u al-Amālī*, “The faith of those who deny the superiority of the *Shaykhayn* is in danger.”<sup>135</sup>

Imām Abū ‘Abd-Allāh al-Dhahabī, after mentioning the superiority of the *Shaykhayn* writes, “May Allāh disgrace them! How ignorant they are!”<sup>136</sup>

It is in *Khulāṣat al-Fatāwā*, “Those Rāfiḍis who give superiority to Sayyidunā ‘Alī to others (i.e. the *Shaykhayn*) are innovators.”<sup>137</sup>

It is in *Faṭḥ al-Qadīr*, “Those Rāfiḍis who give superiority to Sayyidunā ‘Alī over the first three Caliphs are innovators.”<sup>138</sup> This has also been mentioned in *al-Baḥr al-Rā’iq*<sup>139</sup> and in *Majma’ al-Anhuri*.<sup>140</sup>

It is written in *Sharḥ al-Nuqāyah*, “The *Imāmah* (leading the congregational prayer) of those who give superiority to

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Sayyidunā ‘Alī to the *Shaykhayn* is abominably disliked (*makrīḥ*).”<sup>141</sup>

Allāmah Ibrāhīm al-Halabī states, “He who just believes in the ‘Allāmah Ibrāhīm al-Halabī states, “He who just believes in the superiority of Sayyidunā ‘Alī (and does not disparage the superiority of *Shaykhayn*) is from the innovators.”<sup>142</sup>

Allāmah ‘Abd al-‘Alī al-Lakhnawī writes in *Rasā’il al-Arkān*, “As regards to those Shī’as who give preference to Sayyidunā ‘Alī over the *Shaykhayn* but do not disparage them, like the *Zaydiyyah*, then although to pray behind them is permissible, it is severely disliked (*Karāḥah Shadīdah*).”<sup>143</sup><sup>144</sup>

Sayyid Ibn ‘Ābidīn al-Shāmī writes in *Radd al-Muḥṭar*, “If they [Rawāfiḍ] believe Sayyidunā ‘Alī to be superior to the *Shaykhayn* or they disparage the Companions then they are innovators not disbelievers.”<sup>145</sup>

<sup>134</sup> *Ghunyaṭ al-Ṭālibīn*, Faṣl Fī al-Rāfiḍah, vol. 1, p. 180.

<sup>135</sup> *Sharḥ Qaṣīdah Baḍ’ al-Amālī* under verse #34.

<sup>136</sup> *Al-Ṣawā’iq al-Muhrīqah*, pp. 90-91.

<sup>137</sup> *Khulāṣah al-Fatāwā*, Kitāb al-Ṣalāh, vol. 1, p. 149.

<sup>138</sup> *Faṭḥ al-Qadīr*, Kitāb al-Ṣalāh, vol. 1, p. 304.

<sup>139</sup> *Al-Baḥr al-Rā’iq*, Kitāb al-Ṣalāh, vol. 1, p. 611.

<sup>140</sup> *Majma’ al-Anhur Sharḥ Muṭlaqā al-Abḥur*, Kitāb al-Ṣalāh, vol. 1, p. 163.

<sup>141</sup> *Jāmi’ al-Rūmūz* (Imām al-Qahastānī), vol. 1, p. 172.

<sup>142</sup> *Ghunyaṭ al-Muṣṭamī*, p. 443.

<sup>143</sup> And thus, such a prayer has to be repeated.

<sup>144</sup> *Rasā’il al-Arkān*, al-Risālah al-Ūlā fī al-Ṣalāh, p. 99.

<sup>145</sup> *Radd al-Muḥṭar*, Kitāb al-Nikāh, vol. 3, p. 46.

### Question:

Abū ‘Umar Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, the author of *al-*Iṣṭī’āb**, wrote that there were a small number of Companions who regarded Sayyidunā ‘Alī رض as the most superior.

### Answer:

*“Surely we are from Allāh and surely we have to return to Him.* What is the state of a man who hastily accepts the most hidden, weak and far-fetched statement only because it is more supportive of his stance, while not accepting the most apparent and the most robust, strong, unequivocal and evident statements only because it contradicts his stance!”

There are two possibilities:

1. The narration which reached Abū ‘Umar Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, relating that a few number of Companions believed Sayyidunā ‘Alī رض as superior of all the Companions, was indeed known to the earlier scholars, yet somehow they all colluded in hiding it -Allāh forbid!

If this notion is accepted, then we are faced with a great difficulty as such a claim entails doubting one’s faith! Have you not realised that the whole religion, including the Holy Qur’ān and the Ahadith were passed down through the earlier scholars? If we believe that they all colluded in hiding one narration then this would mean that security and validity (*amān*) has been removed from our religion. How would we be sure that many verses of the Holy Qur’ān and Ahadith have not been hidden in the same way? And this is the religion of the Rāfiqis who believe that the Companions have manipulated and changed some of the verses of the Holy Qur’ān. We ask Allāh to safeguard us from such insinuations!

2. Let us assume that such a narration did indeed reach them. The luminary scholars scrutinised the narrations and agreed upon its fictitious nature; thus they disregarded it and did not believe it interfered with the earlier established consensus.

**Reasons why this Claim is Baseless:**

At the end of the day we have to realise the fact that there are thousands of great Imāms and Muḥaddithin who came long before the time of Abū ‘Umar Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr. A significant amount of religious knowledge and narrations have been passed down by and transmitted from these earlier scholars, from which Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr also benefitted.

How can we take a single (Abū ‘Umar Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr’s) statement on board by disregarding the statements of hundreds, nay, thousands of earlier scholars? This is one of the reasons why such statements are baseless.

**Reason 2:** Let us assume that the statement is indeed sound. There is a possibility that the earlier luminary scholars were alerted about such a narration but only after consensus had already been established. No doubt any contradictory statement after the establishment of a consensual opinion is invalid and unacceptable.

The other possibility is that this disagreement was before the consensual opinion was established but after their research the superiority of the *Shaykhayn* was made apparent to them.<sup>146</sup> thus they returned (*rujū*) to the consensus rendering a continuation of an opposing position redundant. Take for example, the companion Sayyidunā Abū Juhayfah Wahab al-Khayr رض who initially deemed Sayyidunā ‘Alī رض as the most superior until Sayyidunā ‘Alī رض himself inspired in him the truth and thereafter he affirmed the superiority of the *Shaykhayn*.

**Reason 3:** Let us believe that such a disagreement did exist from the very beginning. But such an unusual, rare (*nādir*), defective (*majrūh*) and weak (*daīf*) disagreement does not affect the consensus.

By Allāh do justice! If we believe that any statements contradictory to the consensus can be accepted or rejected by anyone, then two-thirds of the Islāmic rulings would be

nullified. This is because you will find narrations, which form the basis of Islamic rulings, free from apparent contradictions by rare and weak statements, as being very few and far between.

Even in respect to many of the agreed upon pillars of our religion, which we believe as being integral to our faith, someone could easily find the most-rejected, defective, disagreeing statements to contradict any one of these. The books contain literally everything!

What can we do? There are individuals who want to dwell into such incorrect statements like Allāh says, “*As for those in whose hearts is deviation, they pursue the indistinct part, desiring to cause thereby sedition and seeking its (wrongful) interpretation.*”

(3:7)

There is a difference of opinion as to the authenticity of the Hadith, “For whomsoever I am master (*mawlā*), ‘Alī is also his master”. The majority of the scholars regard this to be an authentic narration whereas Imām Abū Dāwūd and Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī possess a different opinion. So I ask, if someone does not regard the Hadith as being authentic, would you excuse such a person for not deeming Sayyidunā ‘Alī رض as a master of the believers? Of course not. You would argue with such people and become enemies if they persisted. Then why do you not adopt the same approach with the narration contradicting the superiority of the *Shaykhayn*?

**Reason 4:** The narrations of some Companions, from whom Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr quotes that apparently portray them as holding Sayyidunā ‘Alī رض as the most superior, are not clear with regards to whether the superiority mentioned in them signifies

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<sup>146</sup>i.e. to those few who had previously held the opposing position.

an 'absolute' (*kullī*) superiority or a 'partial' (*juz'ī*) superiority and those narrations signify partial superiority.

**Rebuttal 1:** It is known that save for six or seven Companions, all of the other Companions agreed upon the superiority of the *Shaykhayn*. There are innumerable Ahādīth in this regard, such that rationally, it is impossible for the Companions to have been uninformed of them. Going against the majority and the Ahādīth is treacherous and to accuse a Companion of such treachery is to slander him.

**Rebuttal 2:** In the very narration cited by Abū 'Umar which apparently support the superiority of Sayyidunā 'Alī رض, the body of the Hadīth ends with the words that those Companions would say, "Indeed Sayyidunā 'Alī رض was the first to accept Islām." This indicates the fact that the interpretation<sup>147</sup> of the scholars is supported by this Hadīth itself.

**Rebuttal 3:** We will, Allāh Willing, prove in Part C that the Caliphate of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Siddīq رض was due to his absolute superiority. Sayyidunā 'Umar رض and other Companions proved his superiority, and the allegiance took place for this reason. It is also apparent that among these Companions were those from whom Ibn 'Abd al-Barr took the rare contradictory narration. If they were against the superiority of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr رض then surely being the blessed Companions, and not fearing the outcome, they would have made their stance clear. You must have heard the saying "The one silent from telling the truth is a dumb Satan."<sup>148</sup> Allāh forbid! How can we slander the great Companions with such

accusation? No doubt, they also acknowledged the superiority of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr رض.

**Rebuttal 4:** One of the greatest evidences to prove our stance is the writings of Abū 'Umar Ibn 'Abd al-Barr. Just as he has cited a peculiar and unprecedented narration on this subject matter, similarly he has also written contrary to the majority in regards to the superiority of the Companions over all the other predecessors to the Companions of Badr and followers. He writes that there are some pious Companions of Badr and who, with the exception of the Companions and Hudaybiyyah, are superior to all the other Companions and then he attempts to prove this innovated belief using evidences which do not even correspond to his ideology nor bear any relevance to his argument!

The scholars have answered saying that those evidences do not contradict our stance. From those evidences is the narration, "A day shall come that the one practising (Islām) shall be rewarded the reward of fifty people,"<sup>149</sup> which we mentioned in Part A8 - The Two Groups in relation to the issue of Superiority.

The words of Ibn 'Abd al-Barr are deemed to be based on 'Partial Virtue', which protects him going against the consensus and the majority, making the doubters unable to use his words to prove their own stance - this is evident by the understanding of his words that there is a consensus upon the superiority of *Shaykhayn* (as mentioned in *al-Sawā'iq*); or secondly, his words are deemed to be in reference to 'Absolute Virtue', which means we have to believe that he was heedless of the meaning of *Absolute Virtue* as mentioned to us by the great scholars. In this instance, his statement will be merely baseless.

<sup>147</sup> That this superiority is *juz'ī* (with regards one aspect and not absolute)

<sup>148</sup> *Nūr al-Anwār*, Bāb al-Ijmā', p. 231  
*Kashf al-Asrār 'an Uṣūl Fakhr al-Islām* – Bāb al-Ijmā', vol. 3, p. 343

The reader is advised.

Always remember this one point, that if we acted upon will, satanic ploy. This is that all scholars are humans, and are thus not immune from error. There is always a possibility one may find one or more errors in their works. Thus to be able to distinguish truth from falsehood we take up the position of the majority of the scholars. Anything which is contrary to their (that of the majority) beliefs will be rejected and falsified and salvation is in adhering to the majority, and not to hold onto a slip of an individual in turn goes against the majority. It is safer to deem the words of Ibn 'Abd al-Barr as erroneous as opposed to believing that some of the blessed Companions held a belief contrary to the Ahadith and the majority.

In another narration of Sayyiduna Jâbir رض, the Prophet of Allâh صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلٰيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ has said, "Now will come the one, Allâh has not made the like of him for a long time."<sup>152</sup> There are many other narrations which we shall mention in the following sections. No doubt this has made it clearer that those Companions cited by Ibn 'Abd al-Barr believed in the *Partial Companions* cited by Sayyiduna 'Ali رض otherwise there is *Virtue (fadilah) ju'ziyah*) of Sayyiduna 'Ali رض otherwise there is a contradiction! When we have made the stance of two of those Companions clear, then what need is there to mention the stance of the other four?

Argument 5: Of the six Companions from whom Ibn 'Abd al-Barr has narrated the superiority of Sayyidunā 'Alī رض two are Sayyidunā Abū Saīd al-Khudrī and Sayyidunā Jābir ibn Abd-Allāh رض. These are from those Companions who themselves have narrated the superiority of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Siddiq directly from the Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسالہ وآلہ وسالہ.

Sayyidunā Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī and Sayyidunā Jābir ibn Abd-Allāh narrate that the Messenger of Allāh has said, "Abū Bakr and 'Umar are the leaders of the elders of Paradise of all those who came before and those who are to come after except the Prophets and Messengers."<sup>150</sup>

Sayyidunā Jābir Ibn Abd-Allāh رض himself narrates, "The sun has not risen upon any of you who is superior to Abū Bakr رض."<sup>151</sup>

in Jārīkh Bāghdād, vol. 3, p. 123

*lārīk Bimashq* (Ibn 'Asākir), *Dhikr 'Abd-Allāh wa Yuqāl 'Atīq*, *Hadīth* #3398, Vol. 30, p. 152.

stance and the stance of our teachers of the *Shari'ah*, despite a few of the latter-date scholars opposing the position held by the Imām of the Ahl al-Sunnah Sayyiduna Abū al-Hasan al-Ash'arī<sup>153</sup> by deeming it to be speculative. If Allah permits, I shall dwell into this subject matter further at the end of this book.

Even if, for the sake of argument, the consensus is speculative, it is still useless to the *Tajdīyyah* and *Sanfādīyyah*. We do not pronounce these deviant sects as being disbelievers but we do pronounce them as being innovators. The jurists have also pronounced that the denier of the Prophetic Ascension (*Mīrāj*) to the heavens as being an innovator, notwithstanding only the journey up to Bayt al-Maqdis (*al-Isrā'*) has been proven through definitive evidence.

Allamah Tahir (al-Fattani al-Gujarati) mentions that anyone opposing a single-chain narration (*khabar wahid*) is an innovator, even though single-chain narrations do not establish definiteness.<sup>154</sup> Moreover, considering them as 'innovators' has been explicitly mentioned by the earliest scholars as mentioned previously.

My master, Shaykh Abū al-Ḥusayn Ahmād-e-NURī elegantly says, "If the issue of *Tatdīl* is decisive (*Qat'*) then it is regarded as compulsory (*Fard*), and if speculative (*Dhamm*) then it is regarded as necessary (*Wājib*), and to go against both is a grave

<sup>153</sup> Imām Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī in *Tadrīb al-Rāwī*, Imām Ibrahīm ibn Mīsā ibn Ayyūb, Imām Zayn al-Dīn al-Ṭirāqī in *Sharḥ al-Tabsīrah wa'l-Tadhkīrah*, Imām al-Sakhawī in *Fath al-Mughīth*, Shaykh 'Abd al-'Azīz Pihrāwī in *Muṣābiḥat Kalām*, al-Imām al-Rabbānī Shaykh Ahmad Fāruq Sarhindī 'Mujaddid al-Altā' Thānī" in his *Makūbāt* have all cited that Imām Abū'l Hasan al-Āsh'ar held the position that the consensus (*ijmā'*) is *qatī'* (definitive).

## Warning against the Innovators

My friend, fear Allāh and His Prophet ﷺ and have mercy upon your īmān. Do not tread a path different to the Muslims. Perhaps your ears have not yet heard of the severe punishments and warnings against those who go against the consensus and the majority, otherwise you would not have supported the innovators nor would you have carried such a great calamity on your head.

[Among the textual warnings against the Innovators are:]

Allah says, "And whoever opposes the Noble Messenger after the right path has been made clear to him, and follows a way other than that of the Muslims, We shall leave him as he is, and put him in Hell; and what a wretched place to return!" (4:15)

The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ has said, "Allāh will never allow my Ummah to unite upon misguidance and incorrect beliefs. Allāh's mercy, blessings and protection are with the largest group of Muslims. And he who deviates from this largest group of Muslims will be thrown into Hell."<sup>155</sup>

<sup>153</sup> Imām Ibrāhīm ibn Muṣā ibn Ibrāhīm al-Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī in *Tadrīb al-Rūwī*, Imām Ibrāhīm ibn Muṣā ibn Ayyūb, Imām Zayn al-Dīn al-Īraqī in *Sharh al-Tabṣīrah wa Iḥadīth al-Kāfi*, Imām al-Sakkāhawī in *Fath al-Mughīth*, Shaykh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Pirhāwī in *Muṭābiqat al-Kalām*, al-Imām al-Rabbānī Shaykh Ahmad Farūq Sarhindī “Muṭābiqat al-Kalām” in *Wāḥidat al-‘Ummah* (Beirut: Mu’assasat al-Bāb, 1991), 100.

Thānī" in his *Maktabat* have all cited that *ijmā'* is *qatī'* (definitive). The position that the *consensus* (*ijmā'*) is *qatī'* - Vol. 5, P. 739

155 *Al-Mustadrak 'ala 'l-San'a'* 216

In another narration, "He who deviates from the largest group of Muslims, even as much as a hand span, has himself cut off his connection with Islām."<sup>156</sup>

"There are three types of people who will be disregarded on the Day of Judgement (i.e. will be summarily cast into Hellfire). (From among them is the) one who deviated from the group, disobeyed his leader and died in that state."<sup>157</sup>

The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ has said, "One prayer to another, one Friday prayer to another, one Ramadān to another obliterate the sins committed in between them." Then the Prophet ﷺ said, "Except for three types of people; a polytheist, someone who breaks his allegiance with the leader without any (valid) reason and someone who leaves the Sunnah." He ﷺ then said, "Leaving Sunnah means to leave the group."<sup>158</sup>

The Beloved of Allāh ﷺ has said, "The one who desires a place in the centre of Jannah must stick to the group since the devil is with a single person, and he is far from two people."<sup>159</sup>

In another Hadīth, "Verily Satan is the wolf (enemy) of a man just as the wolf is (the enemy) of a flock. He seizes the lonely sheep; the one sheep going astray from the flock or the one away from the flock. So avoid the divergent paths (that are clearly detached from the Sunnah and the Majority); it is incumbent upon you to remain with the Majority."<sup>160</sup>

The Aḥadīth mentioned in this regard are many, and as you have read earlier, the scholars consider the Tafḍīlīyyah as 'Innovators', so abstain from them. If you stay with them then you will be part of the calamity, "How base it is to be called a sinner after being a Muslim" (49:11); how evil is it to be called an 'innovator' after being a Muslim!

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has said, "The people of innovation are the worst of mankind (*khalq*) and the beasts (*khalīqah*)."<sup>161</sup> (i.e. the entire creation)

The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ has said, "The people of innovations are the dogs of the Hellfire."<sup>162</sup>

The Beloved of Allāh ﷺ has said, "My nation is going to split into seventy-three sects, and all of them will be in the Hellfire except one. And that (saved) group is al-Jamā'ah (The majority)."<sup>163</sup>

In another narration someone asked, "Who are they (the saved sect), O Messenger of Allāh?" He ﷺ replied, "They are those who follow my way and that of my Companions."<sup>164</sup>

The Mercy of the Universe ﷺ has said, "My curse and the curse of Allāh is upon six types of people and the supplication of a Prophet is always heard. (From amongst the six) is the one who leaves the (way of the) Sunnah."<sup>165</sup>

<sup>156</sup> Ibid. Hadīth #409, vol. 1, p. 319.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid. Hadīth #419, vol. 1, p. 322.

<sup>158</sup> Ibid. Hadīth #420, vol. 1, p. 322.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid. Hadīth #395, vol. 1, p. 314.

<sup>160</sup> *Mustad - Imām Ahmad Ibn Ḥanbal, Musnad al-Anṣār, Hadīth #220990, vol. 8, p. 238.*

<sup>161</sup> *Al-Sunan al-Kubrā (al-Nasā'ī), Hadīth #3566, vol. 2, p. 313. Meaning of *khalq* and *khalīqah* have been taken from Majma' Bihār al-Anwār - Khā' - lām - Qāf.*

<sup>162</sup> *Kanz al-`Ummāl, Hadīth #1090, vol. 1, p. 121.*

<sup>163</sup> *Sunan Abū Dā'ūd, Bāb Sharh al-Sunnah, Hadīth #3981, vol. 2, p. 196.*

<sup>164</sup> *Sunan al-Tirmidhī, Kitāb al-Imān, Hadīth #2650, vol. 4, p. 292.*

<sup>165</sup> *Al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr, Hadīth #2883, vol. 3, p. 127.*

"Allāh has veiled repentance (*tawbah*) from the innovator until he denounces the innovation."<sup>166</sup> In other words, if he leaves this world in the state of innovation, then he will die without sincere repentance and thus, without forgiveness.

"Allāh does not accept a (good) deed of an innovator until he leaves the innovation."<sup>167</sup>

"Allāh does not accept the prayers, fasts, alms, Hajj, 'Umrah, Iihād, neither obligatory nor voluntary acts of worship of an innovator and he leaves the fold of Islām just as easily as a strand of hair is removed from dough."<sup>168</sup>

In another narration, "When an innovator dies, Islām has triumphed and achieved victory."<sup>169</sup>

These Ahādīth are, by the Will of Allāh, *sahīh* (authentic) or *ḥasan* (sound), except the first one whose chain is *da'īf* (weak).

Then the Imām mentioned the rulings of those who regard Sayyiduna 'Alī to be superior to the *Shaykhayn* (the *Taṣdīliyyah*) and of those who believe Sayyiduna Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq to be superior in one aspect and Sayyiduna 'Alī in other aspect (the *Sanfaddīyyah*). He mentions that praying Salāh behind them is severely disliked (*makrūh*].

## Section B2: The Verses of the Holy Qur'ān

Proofs from the Holy Qur'ān on the excellence, high rank and overall superiority of the *Shaykhayn*.

**Verse 1:** Allāh says the most honoured in His Sight are the most pious:

لَيَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ إِنَّمَا يُنْهَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَرَّةٍ وَجَنَاحَةٍ شَعُورًا بِأَنَّكُمْ أَكْرَمُكُمْ

عَنَّ أَنْفُسِكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَيْهِ حِلْمٌ

"...Indeed the most honourable among you, in the Sight of Allāh, is one who is the most pious." (49:13)

And in another verse Allāh has called Sayyiduna Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq as the most pious and God-fearing:

وَسَيِّدِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ أَلَّا يُؤْتَ مَالَهُ بِرَبِّيْلِ وَمَا يَكُونُ عَنْكَ مِنْ يَنْهَاكَيْزِيْلِ

الْأَبْيَقِيْلَ وَجَرِيْلَ إِلَيْلِ وَكَرْوَيْلِ

"He - the most pious - will be kept far away from it [Hell]. Who gives his wealth in order to be pure. And no one has done a favour to him, for which he should be compensated. He desires only to please his Lord, the Supreme. And indeed, soon he will be very pleased." (92:17-21)

So combining the meanings of both verses we learn that Sayyiduna Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq is the most honoured in the Sight of Allāh.

<sup>166</sup> *Al-Mu'jam al-Awsat*, Ḥadīth #4202, vol. 3, p. 165.

<sup>167</sup> *Kanz al-'Ummāl*, al-Kitāb al-Awwal, Ḥadīth #1099

<sup>168</sup> *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, p. 38.

<sup>169</sup> *Kanz al-'Ummāl*, al-Kitāb al-Awwal, Ḥadīth #1100, vol. 1, p. 122.

**Point 1:** Those scholars who used this verse to prove the superiority of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq have illustrated to us that the factor for determining a person's excellence and status is by reference to his piety and closeness to Allāh.

**Point 2:** This verse also denotes the exaltedness of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr's (رضي الله عنه) *Wilāyah* (sainthood) as the most honourable in the Sight of Allāh is the one whose *Wilāyah* is the greatest.

**Point 3:** The word *Atqā* (most pious) does not denote *Taqī* (pious) as some have assumed. See for example the *tafsīr* of Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Dīhlawī<sup>170</sup> for a refutation of such an unjustifiable claim.

**Verse 2:** Allāh has praised those who excel in good deeds (Sābiq *bi'l-Khayrāt*):

مُؤْمِنُوْرُشَّا اكْتَسِبُ الْيُنْبَىءَ مَنْ عَجَادَ عَلَيْهِ فَيُنْهَى  
وَمِنْهُمْ مُقْتَسِمُوْرُشَّا سَابِقُوْرُشَّا يَدِيْرُشَّا لَذِكْرُهُ لَقْنُوْرُشَّا

"We then made Our chosen bondsmen the inheritors of the Book; so among them are those who wrongs themselves; and among them are those who traverse the middle ground; and among them are those who, by the command of Allāh, surpassed others in good deeds; this is the greatest favour." (35: 32)

And it is proven from numerous *Aḥadīth* and sayings of the Companions that Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq was the one who surpassed all in good deeds. Therefore this also proves that he is amongst the most praiseworthy of this nation.

Sayyidunā 'Abd-Allāh Ibn Mas'ūd narrates, "I was in the Masjid (al-Nabawī) praying when the Messenger of Allāh was

entered, accompanied by Sayyidunā Abū Bakr and Sayyidunā 'Umar . I was sat making supplications when the Prophet of Allāh said, 'Ask and it will be given to you.' Then the Prophet said, 'Whoever wants to read the Qur'ān as fresh (as when it was revealed), then let him read according to the recitation of Ibn Umm 'Abd<sup>171</sup>.'

Then I went to my house. Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq came to my house to convey the glad tidings. Shortly after, came Sayyidunā 'Umar as Sayyidunā Abū Bakr was leaving my house and found that Sayyidunā Abū Bakr had already conveyed the glad tidings before him. Sayyidunā 'Umar said to Sayyidunā Abū Bakr 'Indeed you always greatly excel in good deeds ('Innaka la-Sabbāq bi al-Khayr)'.<sup>172</sup>

In another narration Sayyidunā 'Umar said, "O Anṣār (Helpers)! O community of Muslims! The most worthy of taking care of the affair of the Prophet of Allāh is 'the second of the two when they were in the cave' whose excelling in goodness is clearly manifest. (*al-Sabbāq al-Mubīn*)."<sup>173</sup>

Sayyidunā 'Alī says, "By Allāh! We did not seek to excel each other in doing good, except that Sayyidunā Abū Bakr had already excelled us in doing so."<sup>174</sup>

The Prophet narrates that Sayyidunā 'Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb said to him "I have not excelled in any good deed except that Abū Bakr excelled in it before me."<sup>175</sup>

<sup>170</sup> *Tafsīr Fath al-'Azīz*, under 49:13.

<sup>171</sup> Sayyidunā Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd .

<sup>172</sup> *Musnād Abū Ya'la*, Hadīth #16 and #17, vol. 1, p. 29

<sup>173</sup> *Sohīl ibn Hibbān*, Hadīth #415, vol. 1, p. 321.

<sup>174</sup> *Al-Mu'jam al-Awsat*, Hadīth #7168, vol. 5, p. 231

<sup>175</sup> *Kanz al-'Ummāl*, Kitāb al-Faqā'il Hadīth #35616, vol. 12, p. 223.

How lofty it is that the Sublime Prophet ﷺ himself is narrating from Sayyidunā 'Umar رضي الله عنه that 'our Abū Bakr is the one who excels all in good!'

"And let not those who possess superiority among you and are the most superior to them all. Oft Forgive, Most Merciful!" (24: 22).

Another interesting fact is that though there were numerous Companions who possessed more wealth than Sayyidunā Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه, his wealth is known as *Ajāl al-Amwāl* (the best wealth) as it gave the most benefit to Islām and that is why the Prophet of Islām ﷺ said, "(Abū Bakr) is the best from the Muslims in terms of (the benefit of) wealth."

"And let not those who possess capacity, swear not to give to the relatives and the needy, and those who emigrate in Allāh's cause; and they should forgive and forbear; do you not like that Allāh may forgive you? And Allāh is Oft Forgiving, Most Merciful" (24: 22).

Another interesting fact is that though there were numerous Companions who possessed more wealth than Sayyidunā Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه, his wealth is known as *Ajāl al-Amwāl* (the best wealth) as it gave the most benefit to Islām and that is why the Prophet of Islām ﷺ said, "(Abū Bakr) is the best from the Muslims in terms of (the benefit of) wealth."

"And those who brought this truth and those who confirm it - it is they who are the righteous." (39: 33).

Sayyidunā 'Alī رضي الله عنه says that the 'one who brought the truth' is the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ and the 'one who testified to it' is Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Siddīq رضي الله عنه.

"The masters of servants are many, but the real one who is the master of all masters.

The Mother of the Believers, Sayyidatunā 'Āishah رضي الله عنها narrates, "When Allāh gave the declaration of my innocence, (Sayyidunā) Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه, who used to provide for Mistāh Ibn Uthāthah for he was his relative, said, 'By Allāh, I will never provide Mistāh with anything because of what he said about 'Āishah.' But Allāh later revealed, 'And may not those who possess superiority among you and possess capacity, swear not to give to the relatives and to the needy, and those who emigrate in Allāh's cause; and

they should forgive and forbear; do you not like that Allāh may forgive you? And Allāh is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful'" (24:22).

After that (Sayyidunā) Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه said, 'Yes! By Allāh! I would love that Allāh forgives me,' and resumed helping Mistāh whom he used to help before." <sup>176</sup>

"وَلَا يَأْتِي أُولُو الْأَفْضَلِ مِنْهُمْ وَالْعَجَّابُ أَنْ يُبَثِّرُ أَوَّلِيَ الْقُرْبَى وَالْأَسْكِنَى وَالْمَهِيَّبَى فِي سَبِيلِ الشَّرِدِ وَيُعَذِّبُهُمْ لِصَفْحِهِمْ الْأَلَّاهُ لَكُمْ وَأَنَّهُ يَغْفِرُ لَهُمْ وَيَعْلَمُهُمْ" <sup>177</sup>

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both are mentioned in the same place and described with the same quality.

**Verse 5:** It is in the Holy Qur'ān that those who spent their wealth in the way of Allāh *before* the conquest of Makkah and fought for His pleasure are superior to those who spent their wealth *after* the Conquest:

لَيَسْرَىٰ مِنْهُمٌْ مَنْ أَنْفَقَ مِنْ كُلِّ أَقْتَلَتْ دِرْجَةً فَرَبِّنَ أَنْفَقُهَا  
مِنْ بَعْدِ مُقْتَلِهِ وَكُلُّهُ أَنْخَنَىٰ اللَّهُ بِسَمَاءَكُلُّهُنَّ حَمِيرٌ ۝

*"Those among you who spent and fought before the conquest of Makkah are not equal to others; they are greater in rank than those who spent and fought after the conquest; and Allāh has promised Paradise to all of them; and Allāh knows well what you do."* (57: 10)

Those who are aware of the early periods of Islām certainly know that the one who at the very critical moments risked his life and spent everything he had for the sake of Islām was none other than Sayyiduna Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq ̄.

**Verse 6:** Allāh says:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ مُؤْمِنُهُ وَجِبْرِيلُهُ وَصَاحِبِيْنِهِ وَالْمُكَتَبَكَهُ بَعْدَكَ طَهِيرٌ ۝

*"...indeed Allāh is his (meaning His Prophet's ̄) Guardian, and jibra'il and the virtuous believers (Shaykhayn) are also his aides; and in addition the angels are also his aides."* (66:4)

In the commentary of this verse, the Prophet of Allāh ̄ said, "The 'virtuous believers' are Abū Bakr and 'Umar."

According to the recitation of the leader of Qur'ānic Reciters, Sayyidunā Ubayy Ibn Ka'b, the verse was, "...the virtuous believers Abū Bakr and 'Umar are also his aides..."<sup>179</sup>

Sayyidunā 'Umar ̄ said (the full wording of the Ḥadīth is mentioned later), "...Messenger of Allāh! Why should you be troubled by that matter? And if that has happened, then verily Allāh is with you, His angels, jibra'il, Mikā'il, I and Abū Bakr and the believers are with you."<sup>180</sup>

*"Guide us on the Straight Path."* (1:5).

In the commentary of this verse, the great Tābi'i scholars Sayyidunā Khwājah Ḥasan al-Baṣrī ̄ and Sayyidunā Abū al-Āliyah ̄ say, "The (way of the) Prophet of Allāh ̄ and his two Companions (Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq and Sayyidunā Umar ̄) is the *straight path*."<sup>181</sup>

It becomes clear from this verse and its commentary that the two great Companions are not only the leaders of the whole community but also the leaders of the rest of the Companions, as all are supplicating to tread upon their path.

**Verse 7:** The Qur'ān calls Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq and Sayyidunā 'Umar ̄ as 'Virtuous believers':

وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ مُؤْمِنُهُ وَجِبْرِيلُهُ وَصَاحِبِيْنِهِ وَالْمُكَتَبَكَهُ بَعْدَكَ طَهِيرٌ ۝

*"...indeed Allāh is his (meaning His Prophet's ̄) Guardian, and jibra'il and the virtuous believers (Shaykhayn) are also his aides; and in addition the angels are also his aides."* (66:4)

<sup>178</sup> *Al-Nukat wa al-'Uyun*, Sūrah Yūnus, verse 25, vol. 2, p.165.

<sup>179</sup> *Tafsīr al-Durr al-Manthūr*, Sūrah Tahrīm, verse 4, vol. 8, p. 223.

<sup>180</sup> *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Kitāb al-Ṭalāq, vol. 1, p. 480.

<sup>181</sup> *Fayd al-Qadīr*, Sharḥ Jāmi' al-Ṣaghīr, Ḥadīth #4985, vol. 4, p. 251.

**Verse 8:** Allāh mentioned the excellences of those who possess knowledge:

قُلْ هُنَّ مَنْ يَسْمُعُ إِلَيْنَا فَنَحْنُ نَعْلَمُ ۚ إِنَّمَا يَنْهَا نَحْنُ ۖ كَلِبٌ  
”Are the knowledgeable and the ignorant equal?” It is only the people of intellect who heed advice.” (39: 9)

**Verse 9:** In another place He - Most Exalted - says:

وَرَبُّكَ أَنْتَ أَمْيَانِكَ ۖ وَالْيَوْمَ أَوْلَىٰ لِلْعِلْمِ ۖ دَرْجَاتٌ كَلِبٌ  
”Allāh will raise the believers among you and those given knowledge to high ranks; and Allāh is Aware of your deeds” (58: 11)

Undoubtedly, the two blessed Companions were the most knowledgeable.

**Verse 10:** The Qur'ān testifies to the truthfulness of the Emigrants (Muhājirin):

لَئِنْ كَانَ الْمُهَاجِرُونَ أَذْيَانَ أَخْرَجُوهُمُ اللَّهُمَّ يَعْلَمُونَ فَقَدْ أَنْهَمْتَ أَشْرَقَ الْأَرْضِ  
يَضْرِبُونَ أَنْهَادَهُ وَرَسُولُكَ هُوَ الظَّرِيرُ  
”And (the booty is) also for the poor migrants who were expelled from their homes and their wealth, seeking Allāh's Munificence and His Pleasure, and aiding Allāh and His Noble Messenger; it is they who are the truthful.” (59: 08).

The verse testifies to the truthfulness of the Emigrants, and it is the consensus of the Emigrants on the fact that the most superior are Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Šiddīq and Sayyidunā 'Umar ؓ; very few will be those who did not explicitly or implicitly mention their superiority.

Imām Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (as mentioned in *al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr*) and Imām Abū Bakr Ibn Abī 'Ayāsh (as mentioned by Imām al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī) have proven the Caliphate of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Šiddīq ؓ using this verse. This is because the Emigrants all agreed to call him “The Caliph of the Messenger of Allāh ؓ”, and the Qur'ān bears testimony to their truthfulness. This has also been mentioned by Ibn Kathīr and 'Allāmah Ibn Hajar al-Makkī in *al-Ṣawā'iq*.

My friend! You have just witnessed the Qur'ān bearing testimony on the virtue and superiority of the *Shaykhayn*. There is nothing greater than the Holy Qur'ān. Leave the unsound reasoning, imperfect intellect and submit to the verses of the Holy Qur'ān.

﴿يَا أَيُّهُ الْكَافِرُونَ مَوْرِي بَيْنَ يَدِيْهِ وَلَا مِنْ خَلْفِهِ تَنْزِيلٌ مِّنْ رَّبِّكَ يَوْمَ حِجَّةٍ﴾

”Falsehood cannot approach it - neither from in front of it nor from behind it; it is sent down by the Wise, the Most Praiseworthy.” (41:42).

Furthermore, Allāh says,

وَمَا أَخْتَلَمُ فِيْهِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ وَكَبِيرٌ إِلَى أَشْبَهِ  
ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ۖ وَإِلَيْهِ أُنِيبُ  
”And whatever you may differ upon, the final decision therein belongs to Allāh; such is my Lord - I rely on Him; and towards Him do I turn.” (42:10)

If you do not listen to the Words of Allāh how then will you listen to the words of others?

لَهُ الْحُكْمُ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَمَنُ

"Only His is the command, and it is towards Him that you will be returned." (28:88)

أَلَيْسَ اللَّهُ بِأَكْبَرُ

"Is not Allāh the Greatest Judge of all judges?" (95:8)

Hadāth proving the superiority of the *Shaykhayn*. There are too Ahādīth proving the superiority of the *Shaykhayn*. There are too many to cite exhaustively here. Thus, only a few are mentioned herewith:

**Hadāth 1:** The Companions would say, "During the lifetime of the Prophet ﷺ, we would say that the best from this community after the Prophet ﷺ is Sayyidunā Abū Bakr, then Sayyidunā 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, then Sayyidunā 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān".<sup>182</sup> The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ heard these words and did not refute them [the 'Silent Approval' (*Taqrīr*) Hadāth].

**Hadāth 2:** The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ has said, "The Sun has not risen or set upon anyone more superior than Abū Bakr except that he was a Prophet."<sup>183</sup> (ؑ)

**Hadāth 3:** The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ has said, "The Sun has not risen over any of you who is better than Abū Bakr."<sup>184</sup> (ؑ)

**Hadāth 4:** The Beloved of Allāh ﷺ has said, "Rūh al-Quđus, Jibrīlؑ came and informed me that the best from my nation after me is Abū Bakr."<sup>185</sup>

**Hadāth 5:** The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ has said, "Abū Bakr is the best of all people except the Prophets."<sup>186</sup>

<sup>182</sup> *Al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr*, 'Abd-Allāh ibn 'Umarؑ, Hadāth #13132, vol. 12, p. 221.

<sup>183</sup> *Kanz al-'Ummal*, Fādā'il Abī Bakr al-Šiddīqؑ, Hadāth #36619, vol. 11, p. 254.

<sup>184</sup> *Al-Kāmil fī Du'āfi al-Riyād*, 'Ikrimah ibn 'Ammār, Hadāth #276, vol. 5, p. 484.

<sup>185</sup> *Al-Mu'jam al-Awsat*, Hadāth #6448, vol. 5, p. 24.

<sup>186</sup> *Al-Kāmil fī Du'āfi al-Riyād*, 'Ikrimah ibn 'Ammār, Hadāth #32561, vol. 6, p. 484.

## Section B3: The Prophetic Sayings (Ahādīth)

**Hadith 6:** The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ has said, "No Companion of a Prophet or Messenger, nor the Companion of Yāsīn<sup>187</sup>, has been greater than Abū Bakr."<sup>188</sup>

**Hadith 7:** The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ has said, "Jibrīl (ﷺ) came to me and I asked, 'Who will emigrate (to al-Madīnah al-Munawwarah) with me?' He answered, 'Abū Bakr, and he is going to be the guardian of your Community's affair after you and he is the best of your Community.'"<sup>189</sup>

**Hadith 8-9:** The Beloved Prophet of Allāh ﷺ has said, "The best of my Community after me is Abū Bakr and 'Umar."<sup>190</sup>

**Hadith 10:** Narrated by Sayyidunā 'Alī and also by Sayyidunā Zubayr Ibn al-'Awwām that the Master of the Universe ﷺ has said, "Abū Bakr and 'Umar are the best of all those who came before and those who are to come, the best from the dwellers of the heavens and earth, save the Prophets and Messengers."<sup>191</sup>

**Hadith 11-15:** Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ has said, "I was with the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ when Abū Bakr and 'Umar ﷺ came from ahead of us. The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ said to me, 'O 'Alī! These two are the leaders of all the old and young from the dwellers of jannah after the Prophets and Messengers.'"

Narrated by Imām Ḥasan al-Mujtabā رض<sup>192</sup>, Sayyidunā Anas ibn Mālik<sup>193</sup>, Sayyidunā Abū Juhayfah<sup>194</sup>, Sayyidunā Jābir ibn 'Abd-Allāh and Sayyidunā Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī رض<sup>195</sup>.

**Hadith 16:** Once Sayyidunā Abū al-Dardā رض was seen walking in front of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq رض. The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ said to him, "Are you walking in front of that person which the Sun has not risen over anyone better than?"<sup>196</sup>

In a variant, "Are you walking in front of that person who is better than you? The Sun has not risen over anyone better than Abū Bakr excluding the Prophets and Messengers."<sup>197</sup>

**Hadith 17:** In another narration, "Are you walking in front of that person who is better than you?" Sayyidunā Abū al-Dardā رض asked, "O Prophet of Allāh! (Is he) better than me?" The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ replied, "Better than you and the people of Makkah." He again asked, "(Is he) better than me and the people of Makkah?" He رض replied, "He is better than you, the people of Makkah and the people of al-Madīnah," He asked, "(Is he) better than me, the people of Makkah and the people of al-Madīnah?" He رض answered him saying, "The heavens have not shaded anyone nor has the earth carried anyone who is better than Abū Bakr other than the Prophets and Messengers."<sup>198</sup>

<sup>187</sup> A man (named Ḥabīb al-Najjār) from the Town advises the people to accept the call of the Messengers as mentioned in Sūrah Yāsīn.

<sup>188</sup> *Tārīkh Dīmashq* (Ibn 'Asākir), vol. 62, p. 427. *Subul al-Hudā wa al-Rashād*, vol. 11, p. 247.

<sup>189</sup> *Kanz al-'Ummāl*, Fadā'il Abī Bakr al-Ṣiddīq رض, Hadith #32585, vol. 11, p. 251.

<sup>190</sup> *Kanz al-'Ummāl*, Fadā'il Abī Bakr Wa 'Umar, Hadith #32660, vol. 11, p. 258.

<sup>191</sup> Ibid. Hadith #3266.

<sup>192</sup> *Musnād Imām Ahmad*, Musnād 'Alī Ibn Abī Tālib رض, Hadith #602, vol. 2, p. 174.

<sup>193</sup> *Al-Āḥādīth al-Mukhāṭirah*, Hadith 3226, vol. 1, p. 679.

<sup>194</sup> *Sunan ibn Mājah*, Bāb Fadl Abī Bakr al-Ṣiddīq, Hadith #100, vol. 1, p. 37.

<sup>195</sup> *Al-Mu'jam al-Awsat*, Hadith #3808, vol. 8, p. 340. Ibid. Hadith 4431, vol. 4, p. 359.

<sup>196</sup> *Kanz al-'Ummāl*, vol. 12, p. 224.

<sup>197</sup> *Kanz al-'Ummāl*, Kitāb al-Fadā'il, Fadl al-Shaykhayn رض, Hadith #36107, vol. 13, p. 7.

## Part C: Further Virtues & Excellences of the Shaykhayn

Imām Ahmad Ridā ﷺ wrote this part in several sections. Only three sections; Section 1, Section 2 and Section 6 have actually been located. This indicates that there were at least six sections in this part. Moreover, the Imām writes in one place, "...like it will be proven in the section of *al-Wazzārah* (ministry)" and in another place he writes, "In the section of *al-‘Ilm* (knowledge)", however these two sections are not present in the manuscript obtained. This suggests that there are in fact more than six sections in this part.

From the sections we have, the great Imām mentions the sacrifices and the willingness of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddiq ؓ to give his life for the honour of Islām and the Prophet of Islām ؓ in the first section.

In section two, the physical description of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddiq ؓ and some of the instances in which he was present with the Prophet of Allāh ؓ are mentioned.

In section six, the great Imām writes about the bond and resemblances of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddiq ؓ to the Beloved of Allāh ؓ. Unfortunately, this section is incomplete in the manuscript we have. The Imām mentions 6 resemblances.

A summary of the sections is as follows:



## Section C1: The Sacrifices of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq

Aḥādīth which prove that the readiness of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq to sacrifice his life for the Prophet of Allāh was far greater than any other Companion.

Allāh chose Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq to protect His Beloved by endangering his own life. Thousands of years of worship are not even equal to an hour of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq's services. This is true to such an extent that Sayyidunā 'Umar said, "Abū Bakr's one day (in the cave of Thawr) is far superior to the whole life of 'Umar."<sup>199</sup>

The way Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq showed courage and support for the Prophet of Allāh during times of severe difficulties cannot be replicated by anyone. In proving this point, the following Aḥādīth are cited:

**Hadīth 1:** Sayyidunā 'Alī states, "Mercy of Allāh upon you, 0 Abū Bakr! You were an affectionate Companion and friend of the Prophet of Allāh; a source of joy to him; and one who knew his secrets and enjoyed the privilege of being consulted by him. You supported the truth of his message at a time when everybody belied him; you supported him when others had deserted him; and you remained firm in helping him in trials

when others had withdrawn their support. In the days of hardship you were his best Companion."<sup>200</sup>

During the early period of Islām, when the disbelievers were in control and tried their utmost to cause harm to the Beloved Prophet of Allāh, it was only Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq who showed his full support and defended the Messenger of Allāh. At certain times when there were enemies around, he would seek and become the attention of the enemies by which they would divert their cruelty and abuse towards him rather than the Prophet of Allāh. Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq would bear the persecution of the enemies but could not bear to see his Beloved harmed even the slightest.

**Hadīth 2:** Once, when the Prophet of Allāh was praying in the vicinity of the Ka'bah, 'Uqbah Ibn Abī Mu'īt came and wrapped a piece of cloth around his blessed neck and began choking him severely. Sayyidunā Abū Bakr came along, grabbed his shoulders and pushed him away from the Prophet of Allāh saying: "Do you kill a man just because he says 'My Lord is Allāh'?"<sup>201</sup>

**Hadīth 3:** The disbelievers began to attack the Prophet of Allāh one day until he lost consciousness. Sayyidunā Abū Bakr stood and began calling out: 'Woe unto you! Do you kill a man just for saying my Lord is Allāh? The people asked one another: "Who is this?" And they said: "That is Ibn Abī Quhāfah, the madman."<sup>202</sup>

**Hadīth 4:** The Noble Prophet would openly denounce the idols. He declared they could do neither any good nor harm.

<sup>199</sup> *Kanz al-'Ummāl*, Faḍl al-Ṣiddīq, Hadīth #35615 - Vol. 2, Pg. 1292 Al Muhibb al-Tabārī also cites this in *al-Riyād al-Nadrāh* with a slight variation in the wording pgs. 105-6, First Chapter, 8th Sub-section. [At the end of the Hadīth where Sayyidunā Abū Bakr said - "...now enter O Messenger of Allāh! So he entered..." Sayyidunā 'Umar said - "By the One in Whose control is my soul! That one night is better than the entire family of 'Umar!"

<sup>200</sup> *Al-Bahr al-Zakhkhar* (Musnād al-Bazzār), Hadīth #928, vol. 3, p. 138.

<sup>201</sup> *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Kitāb al-Faḍā'il, Hadīth #3678, vol. 2, p. 524.

<sup>202</sup> *Al-Muṣṭadrak 'alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn*, Hadīth #4424, vol. 4, p. 11.

One day the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ was praying in the vicinity of the Ka'bah. Whenever the disbelievers asked him ﷺ a question, he ﷺ would answer with the truth. They asked, "Are you mocking our idols?" So the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ said, "Yes." They then attacked him ﷺ all together.

A man went quickly to inform Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq ﷺ. He immediately ran to the help of the Prophet ﷺ and he pushed them away and said, "Do you kill a man just because he says, 'My Lord is Allāh' and even though he ﷺ has brought to you clear signs from His Lord?"

Thereupon Abū Jahl and other enemies of Islām began beating Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ﷺ heavily. The beating was so severe that Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ﷺ fell unconscious. He had to be carried to his house and he did not regain consciousness for several hours. He would keep repeating, "How Blessed are You, O the Most Magnificent, the Most Generous!"<sup>203</sup>

**Hadīth 5:** Another similar incident occurred, and Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ﷺ was seen weeping whilst reciting the following verse to the *kuffār*: "What! You want to kill a man just because he says, 'Allāh is my Lord' whereas he has indeed brought clear signs to you from your Lord? And supposedly if he is speaking wrongly, then the calamity of wrongful speech is upon him; and if he is truthful, then part of what he promises you will reach you; indeed Allāh does not guide any transgressor; excessive liar."<sup>204</sup>

**Hadīth 6:** Sayyidunā 'Alī ibn Abī Tālib ﷺ epitomises the reputation of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ﷺ as a quiet achiever who

never put his own needs first and was devoted to Islām and its Messenger, Sayyidunā Muḥammad ﷺ.<sup>205</sup>

When Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ became the leader of the Muslims, he delivered a speech in which he enquired of his audience, "Who is the most courageous man in Islām?" The audience responded, "You! Amīr al Mu'minīn (Leader of the faithful)."

He looked at the men seated before him and said, "It is true I have never faced an opponent and lost, but I am not the most courageous. That honour belongs to Abū Bakr." He then narrated the above incident of how Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq ﷺ protected the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ when nobody was able to protect him. After narrating this, Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ began to weep so much so that his blessed beard became soaked with his tears.

Then Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ asked: "Who is better, Abū Bakr or the believer from the family of Pharaoh?"<sup>206</sup> The people remained quiet. He said: "Why don't you answer? By Allāh! One moment in the life of Abū Bakr is greater than the entire life of the believer from the family of Pharaoh! The believer from the family of Pharaoh was a man who concealed his faith while Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ﷺ was a man who proclaimed his faith publicly."

<sup>205</sup> *Musnād al-Bazzār* #928 - Vol. 3, Pg. 138, *al-Āhādīth al-Mukhārah* - al-Maqdīsī #398 - vol. 2, p. 15

<sup>206</sup> His story has been mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān, "And said a Muslim man from the people of Fir'aun, who used to hide his faith, 'What! You want to kill a man just because he says, 'Allāh is my Lord' whereas he has indeed brought clear signs to you from your Lord? And supposedly if he is speaking wrongly, then the calamity of wrongful speech is upon him; and if he is truthful, then part of what he promises you will reach you; indeed Allāh does not guide any transgressor, excessive liar." (40:28).

**Hadith 7:** When there were merely 39 Muslims, Sayyidunā Abū Bakr رض sought the permission of the Messenger of Allāh صلی اللہ علیہ وسالہ وآلہ وسالہ to invite people openly. On his persistent request the Messenger of Allāh صلی اللہ علیہ وسالہ وآلہ وسالہ gave his consent and all of them went to the Ḥaram to preach. Sayyidunā Abū Bakr رض delivered the first ever *Khuṭbah* (Sermon) at that time; and became the first of the Companions to invite others towards Allāh and His Beloved Messenger صلی اللہ علیہ وسالہ وآلہ وسالہ. Sayyidunā Hamzah رض accepted Islām on the very same day. When the disbelievers and idolaters from amongst the Quraysh heard it they attacked the Muslims from all sides.

Sayyidunā Abū Bakr رض, despite being regarded as the noblest of all the people in Makkah, was beaten to within a whisker of his life. He was kicked, thrashed with shoes, trampled under feet and handled most roughly and savagely. He became unconscious. This is the place to observe his extreme love for the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسالہ وآلہ وسالہ that when he gained consciousness and opened his eyes in the evening he first enquired, "How is the Messenger of Allāh صلی اللہ علیہ وسالہ وآلہ وسالہ?" His deep love for the Sublime Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسالہ وآلہ وسالہ, in reality, was the primary cause of his success. His love and respect for the Messenger of Allāh صلی اللہ علیہ وسالہ وآلہ وسالہ was without limit.<sup>207</sup>

**Hadith 8:** On the day of the Battle of Badr, he had his sword unsheathed and would circle the Messenger of Allāh صلی اللہ علیہ وسالہ وآلہ وسالہ, defending him رض and attacking anyone who attempted to confront him رض.

Sayyidunā 'Alī رض relates that on the day of (the Battle of) Badr, the Muslims built a tent (*'arīsh*) for the Messenger of Allāh صلی اللہ علیہ وسالہ وآلہ وسالہ and we discussed who would guard the Messenger of Allāh صلی اللہ علیہ وسالہ وآلہ وسالہ. I swear by Allāh! No one other than Sayyidunā Abū Bakr رض guarded him. The Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسالہ وآلہ وسالہ stayed in the tent for some time,

praying for the success of his nation, while Sayyidunā Abū Bakr رض could be seen walking back and forth; his sword unsheathed, ready to repel any threat to his Beloved رض.<sup>208</sup>

**Hadith 9:** During the night of Hijrah (the Emigration), Sayyidunā Abū Bakr رض would at times walk in front of the Messenger of Allāh صلی اللہ علیہ وسالہ وآلہ وسالہ, at times behind him, at times on his right and at other times on his left; protecting the Prophet of Allāh صلی اللہ علیہ وسالہ وآلہ وسالہ (from all directions) lest any disbeliever launched an attack.

In the night of Hijrah (Emigration), the blessed feet of the Beloved Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسالہ وآلہ وسالہ became swollen so Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq رض carried him رض on his shoulders and walked briskly until they reached a cave<sup>209</sup>. Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq رض first entered the cave to check for any harm. When he cleaned the cave, he went out and carried the Prophet of Allāh صلی اللہ علیہ وسالہ وآلہ وسالہ into the cave. There was a hole in the cave, so he covered the hole with his heel fearing lest a poisonous creature should cause harm to the Beloved رض.

The Mercy of the Universe عز وجلہ placed his blessed head on the lap of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq رض and went to sleep. Whilst in this state, a snake bit his foot. The greatest Companion did not move his foot lest, in the slightest, it would disturb the sleep of his Beloved رض. However, due to the excruciating pain, tears fell from his eyes and landed on the blessed face of the Beloved رض. The Messenger of Allāh صلی اللہ علیہ وسالہ وآلہ وسالہ woke up and asked as to what had happened. He replied saying that a snake had bitten his foot. So the Beloved of Allāh صلی اللہ علیہ وسالہ وآلہ وسالہ rubbed his blessed saliva on his foot and it was immediately healed. However, in the latter days of his life,

<sup>207</sup> *Al-Mu'jam al-Awsat*, Hadith #7306,

<sup>208</sup> *Kanz al-'Ummal*, vol. 12, p. 335.

<sup>209</sup> Cave of Thawr

the pain returned and was ultimately the cause of his martyrdom - [ﷺ].<sup>210</sup>

**Hadith 10:** Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq ﷺ narrates: "After we had left the Cave of Thawr, whilst seeking shade, I noticed a boulder which offered some shade. So we dismounted there and I levelled a place and covered it with an animal hide for the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ to sleep (for a while). I then said, 'Sleep, O Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, and I will guard you.' So the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ slept and I went out to guard him (ﷺ). Suddenly I saw a shepherd approaching us. I asked him, 'To whom do you belong, O boy?' He replied, 'I belong to a man of Quraysh.' The boy mentioned his name, and I recognised him. I said, 'Do your sheep give milk?' He replied, 'Yes.' I then asked, 'Will you milk them for us?' He said, 'Yes.'

He caught hold of a sheep and I asked him to clean its teat from dust, hairs and dirt. The shepherd milked a little milk in a wooden container. I had a leather container which I carried for the Beloved Messenger ﷺ to drink water and perform ablution from.

I went to the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, reluctant to wake him up, but when I returned to him, the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ was already awake. I added water to the milk container, till the milk became cold. Then I said, 'Drink, O Prophet of Allāh ﷺ!' He (ﷺ) drank till I was pleased. Then he (ﷺ) asked, 'Has the time for our departure come?' I said, 'Yes.' So we departed after midday. Surāqah Ibn Mālik (رضي الله عنه) who at this stage had not as yet embraced Islām) followed us and I said, 'We have been caught,

0 Messenger of Allāh! He (ﷺ) said, 'Do not despair, for Allāh is with us!'

The Prophet ﷺ invoked a prayer against him (i.e. Surāqah) and so the legs of his horse sank into the earth up to its belly. Surāqah said, 'I see that you have invoked against me. Please invoke good for me, and by Allāh, I will cause those who are seeking you to return.' The Prophet ﷺ invoked goodness for him and he was saved. Then, whenever he met somebody on the way, he would say, 'I have looked for him here in vain.' So he caused whomever he met to return. Thus Surāqah fulfilled his promise."<sup>211</sup>

When Surāqah approached, Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ﷺ began to worry and wept. The Prophet of Allāh asked, "Why are you crying O Abū Bakr?" He replied, "O Messenger of Allāh, I am not crying for fear that they will kill me. I am afraid for you."<sup>212</sup>

In short, in every state and circumstance, the greatest Companion risked his life in order to protect the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ and in every difficult situation he accompanied him ﷺ.

Allāh does not choose an insignificant individual for the fulfilment of an important task. Allāh chose Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq ﷺ in order to protect and defend His Beloved ﷺ. This illustrates the fact that Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq ﷺ was the most worthy of such a task. He became the most intimate friend of the Prophet ﷺ and his most beloved.

The qualities which are essential to become worthy of such a position are:

<sup>210</sup> *Dalā'il al-Nubuwwah* (Imām al-Bayhaqī) – Vol. 1, pg. 317 #731

<sup>211</sup> *Saḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Bāb Ḥijrat al-Nabīyy (ﷺ), Hadith # 3626, vol. 2, p. 689.

<sup>212</sup> *Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Ḥibbān*, Kitāb al-Tārīkh, Hadith 6248, vol. 8, p. 64.

1. The lover's habits and lifestyle to be very similar to that of his beloved's, and will often seem to be the same.

2. The beloved having absolute trust in his lover.

3. The love of the beloved shines so brilliantly in the lover's heart that he forgets everything and everyone in order to be united with his beloved; and to protect his beloved from the slightest harm, he would be willing to sacrifice his own life.

4. Absolute forbearance and patience is granted to him such that difficulties and toils do not cause him to waiver.

5. Courage, valour and generosity are found in the lover.

Allāh choosing such an individual for His Beloved ﷺ is an indication that Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq ؓ possessed all four qualities at the highest level.

No doubt, there were none closer to the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ than the *Shaykhayn*. Some of the reasons for this are as follows:

**Reason 1:** No one from the *Anṣār* (Helpers) and the *Muhājirūn* (Emigrants) had the courage to look directly at the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ but the two blessed Companions looked at his blessed face and he ﷺ would look at them.<sup>213</sup>

**Reason 2:** They would smile at him ﷺ and he ﷺ would smile at them and this is highly indicative of the closeness between them and the great distinction the *Shaykhayn* had with him ﷺ.<sup>214</sup>

**Reason 3:** The Companions would address each other by their respective names but Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq ؓ would be addressed with his titles. The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ himself would also address Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq ؓ with his titles.<sup>215</sup>

**Reason 4:** If Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq ؓ was absent from a blessed gathering, his place would be left empty and none of the Companions would occupy that place out of respect for him. When he would come he would sit in his place. The Beloved of Allāh ﷺ would turn towards him and would converse with him directly while the rest would listen.<sup>216</sup>

## Section C2: The Status of the *Shaykhayn* in the Eyes of the Prophet ﷺ

<sup>213</sup> *Jāmi' al-Tirmidhī*, Kitāb al-Manāqib, Ḥadīth #3688, vol. 5, 386.

<sup>214</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>215</sup> *Uṣd al-Ğahabah*, Dhikr, 'Abd-Allāh ibn 'Uthmān, vol. 2, p. 301.

<sup>216</sup> *Al-Muṣadrak 'alā al-Ṣāḥīḥayn*, (Imām al-Hākim), vol. 3, p. 293.

**Reason 5:** The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ would listen to poetry from Sayyidunā Ḥassān Ibn Thābit ﷺ in praise of his beloved [Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ﷺ].

*"The second of the two in the lofty cave and*

*Verily, the enemy encircled it when they ascended the mountain,  
And indeed he is the unparalleled beloved of the Prophet of Allāh*

*And the entirety of creation has knowledge of this."*

When the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ heard these verses from Sayyidunā Ḥassān ﷺ, he ﷺ smiled and said, "O Ḥassān! Indeed you have spoken the truth."<sup>217</sup>

**Reason 6:** In his absence, the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ mentioned to the Companions the status of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq ﷺ with the words, "Now will come the one, the like of whom, Allāh has not created after me. And on the Day of Judgement his intercession will be like my intercession." When Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq ﷺ arrived, the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ stood up for him, kissed his forehead and embraced him for a long time.<sup>218</sup>

**Reason 7:** Once whilst the Prophet ﷺ and the Companions swam in a river, he ﷺ instructed the Companions to swim to their dearest friend. All the Companions did so until there remained only the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ and Sayyidunā Abū Bakr

al-Ṣiddīq ﷺ. The Prophet ﷺ swam towards him, embraced him and said, "If I was to choose a dearest friend then verily I would have chosen Abū Bakr. However, He (Allāh) is my intimate friend (*Khalīfah*)."<sup>219</sup>

**Reason 8:** Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ mentions his greatness, "You possessed the best qualities; you had the best past; you ranked the highest; and you were closest to him ﷺ."<sup>220</sup>

**Reason 9:** Imām Zayn al-Ābidīn 'Alī ﷺ was once asked about the status of the *Shaykhayn* in the court of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ. He replied, "They are both resting next to the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ."<sup>221</sup>

**Reason 10:** Whenever the Prophet ﷺ mentioned his Companions, he ﷺ would mention the *Shaykhayn* first.

**Reason 11:** On returning from the Farewell Hajj, the Prophet ﷺ delivered a sermon. After praising Allāh he ﷺ said, "O People! Indeed Abū Bakr has not upset me at all, so understand his status. I am pleased with Abū Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmān, 'Alī, Talhah, Zubayr, Sa'd, 'Abd al-Rahmān Ibn 'Awf and the First Emigrants (*al-Muhājirūn al-Awwālūn*) - so understand their status."<sup>222</sup>

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ mentioned him separately first, then with the rest, illustrating his prominent status in the eyes of the Messenger ﷺ.

<sup>217</sup> *Tārīkh Dimashq* (Ibn 'Asākir), Dhikr 'Abd-Allāh wa yuqāl 'Atīq, Hadīth #3398, Vol. 30, p. 152.

<sup>218</sup> *Al-Muṣṭadrak* 'alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn, (Imām al-Hakīm), Dhikr Abū Bakr Ibn Abī Quhāfah, Hadīth #4461, vol. 3, p. 82.

<sup>219</sup> *Tārīkh Baghīdā*, vol. 3, p. 123

<sup>220</sup> *Tārīkh Dimashq* (Ibn 'Asākir), Dhikr 'Abd-Allāh wa yuqāl 'Atīq, Hadīth #3398, Vol. 30, p. 152.

**Reason 12:** On the day of the Conquest of Makkah, Sayyidunā Abū Bakr رض took his father to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. On seeing him the Beloved of Allāh ﷻ said, "Why did you trouble him; I would have come to him in your house", Sayyidunā Abū Bakr رض said "O Prophet of Allāh! It was more appropriate for him to come to you." The Holy Prophet ﷺ made Abū Quhāfah (the father of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr رض) sit before him رض and patted his chest, and moved him to accept Islām which he (immediately) did.<sup>223</sup>

**Reason 13:** The Prophet ﷺ has said, "Indeed there are two angels in the heavens. One commands with strictness and the other with gentleness and both are correct." He ﷺ then named the angels, Sayyidunā Jibrā'il رض and Sayyidunā Mikā'il رض. Then he ﷺ said, "And there are two Prophets, one commands with strictness and the other with gentleness and both are correct." He then mentioned their names, Sayyidunā Ibrahīm رض and Sayyidunā Nūh رض. Then he ﷺ said, "And I have two Companions, one commands with strictness and the other with gentleness and both are correct." He ﷺ then mentioned Sayyidunā Abū Bakr and Sayyidunā 'Umar رض.<sup>224</sup>

**Reason 14:** It was the habit of the Beloved Prophet ﷺ that he ﷺ would visit the house of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Siddiq رض twice in a day - and this is a blessing which is not describable. The Mother of the Believers, Sayyidatunā 'Ā'ishah رض narrates, "Ever since I reached the age of discernment, I have always known my parents to practise Islām; not a day has passed but

the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ visited us, both in the morning and the evening."<sup>225</sup>

**Reason 15:** The status of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr رض in the court of the Prophet ﷺ was so well known, that even the disbelievers would come to him after the Prophet ﷺ. They would consider his opinion to be the opinion of the Prophet ﷺ.

**Reason 16:** It was observed on many occasions that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ would converse with Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Siddiq رض, and through him, he رض would answer many questions even though Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Siddiq رض had nothing directly to do with the questions nor the questioner. Even when making general comments, he رض would address them to Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Siddiq رض.

The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ would turn towards him, and would answer the questions by conversing with him. As mentioned in the incident of Sayyidunā Buraydah al-Aslāmī رض and the 70 riders who came to the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ.<sup>226</sup>

In another narration, the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ was resting in his tent and then raised his head crying (in joy) and said, "O Abū Bakr! Glad tidings to you. The Victory of Allāh has come. By Allāh, I can see Jibrā'il رض on his mare in the air. He descended, mounted upon the mare and then disappeared. Then when he appeared I saw dust on his lips (meaning he took part in the battle)."<sup>227</sup>

<sup>223</sup> *Musnād - Imām Ahmad* Ibn Ḥanbal, *Asmā' bint Abi Bakr* رض, *Hadīth* #27023, vol. 10, p. 274.

<sup>224</sup> *Al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr*, *Hadīth* #19667, vol. 13, p. 214.

<sup>225</sup> *Sahīh al-Bukhārī*, Bāb Hīrat al-Nabīyy ﷺ, vol. 2, p. 3616.

<sup>226</sup> *Al-isti'āb Fī Ma'rīfāt al-Āshāb*, vol. 1, p. 63

<sup>227</sup> *Al-Durr al-Manthūr*, Sūrah al-Anfāl, verse 9, vol. 4, p. 25.

When the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ entered Makkah on the day of the Conquest, he ﷺ observed the women cleaning the dust from the mouths of the horses. So he ﷺ smiled towards Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ؓ and said, "O Abū Bakr, what does Ḥassān ibn Thābit say?" So he read the verses:

*May I lose my sons if you do not see our horses, O Kuffar of Makkah,*

*Causing dust to rise from both sides of Kadā (a hill near Makkah)*

*They pull at the reins quickly*

*The women wiping them with their veils.*

The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ then said, "Enter from the place Ḥassān has mentioned (the mount of Kadā)".<sup>228</sup>

During the Battle of Uhud, Sayyidunā Ṭalhah ؓ shielded the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ. The Prophet ﷺ turned around to Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ؓ and said, "O Abū Bakr! Ṭalhah has made Paradise necessary for him."<sup>229</sup>

**Reason 17:** The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ would teach his Companions to respect Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq ؓ and this denoted the great status he had in the eyes of the Prophet ﷺ.<sup>230</sup>

Once there was a disagreement between Sayyidunā Rabi'ah ibn Ka'b and Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ؓ. The Prophet ﷺ was informed

so he ﷺ said, "O Rabī'ah, what do you and al-Ṣiddīq disagree upon?" He replied, "O Prophet of Allāh! He wanted me to say the same words to him as he had said to me and I did not."

The Prophet ﷺ said, "Yes, don't say the same words to him as he had said to you. Instead say: 'May God forgive you, Abū Bakr.' With tears in his eyes, Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ؓ went away while saying: "May Allāh reward you with goodness for my sake, 0 Rabī'ah ibn Ka'b, may Allāh reward you with goodness for my sake, 0 Rabī'ah ibn Ka'b..."<sup>231</sup>

Once the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ saw a Companion walk in front of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ؓ. He ﷺ said to him, "Do you walk in front of the one who is far better than you?"<sup>232</sup> This narration has also been cited in the previous part.

**Reason 18:** Even during the time of the Beloved Prophet both (the *Shaykhayn*) would take care of the affairs of the people. People would come to them to enquire about the rulings and ask for their verdict.<sup>233</sup>

Once Sayyidunā Abū al-Yusr (Ka'b ibn 'Amr al-Anṣārī) ؓ erred and sought Sayyidunā Abū Bakr's ؓ counsel. He replied, "Fear Allāh, Conceal it, ask for forgiveness and do not inform anyone of it."<sup>234</sup>

**Reason 19:** On the day of (the Battle of) Badr, Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ؓ was given control of the right wing of the army. Angel Jibrīl ؓ descended with a thousand angels towards him. The

<sup>228</sup> *Al-Muṣṭadrak 'alā al-Ṣahīḥayn*, Kitāb Ma'rīfat al-Ṣahābah, Hadīth #4499, vol. 4, p. 19.

<sup>229</sup> *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, Kitāb al-Manāqib, Hadīth #3759, vol. 5, p. 412.

<sup>230</sup> *Al-Muṣṭadrak 'alā al-Ṣahīḥayn*, (Imām al-Ḥākim), Kitāb al-Nikkāh, Hadīth #2718, vol. 2, p.188.

<sup>231</sup> *Musnād Imām Ahmad ibn Ḥanbal*, vol. 4, p. 58.

<sup>232</sup> *Al-Jāmi' li-Aḥkām al-Rāwī wa Addīb al-Ṣāmī* (al-Khatīb al-Baghdādī)

<sup>233</sup> *Al-İṣrāb fī Ma'rīfat al-Ash'hāb*, Buraydah al-Aslāmī ؓ vol. 1, p. 56.

<sup>234</sup> *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, vol. 2, p. 144.

left side of the army was in the control of Sayyidunā ‘Alī رض and Angel Mikārīl ع came with other angels to him.<sup>235</sup>

Everyone knows the difference in importance between the right and left wing of an army, and also of who the most superior angel is. The most superior angel, Sayyidunā Jibrīl ع, was sent to the one who is most superior.

**Reason 20:** When the Prophet of Allāh ص saw the disbelievers approaching the plains of Badr, he ص supplicated, “O Allāh! Quraysh appear, with pride and arrogance, to oppose You and to deny Your Prophet!” The Prophet ص held the shoulder of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr رض and said, “O Allāh! I ask from You what You have promised.”

Sayyidunā Abū Bakr رض said, “Glad tidings! By Allāh! Allāh shall fulfil the promise He made to His Prophet ص.<sup>236</sup>

**Reason 21:** When the Prophet ص manifested his anger, no one had the courage to speak to him except for Sayyidunā Abū Bakr and Sayyidunā ‘Umar رض.<sup>237</sup>

Once Sayyidunā Abū Bakr رض came and sought permission to see the Messenger of Allāh ص. He found people sitting at his door and none amongst them had been granted permission, but it was granted to Sayyidunā Abū Bakr رض so he went inside. Then came Sayyidunā ‘Umar رض who too was granted permission to enter; upon doing so he found the Prophet of Allāh ص sitting sad and silent, with his wives around him (رض). Sayyidunā ‘Umar رض said, “I would say something which would make the Holy

prophet ص smile,” so he said, “O Messenger of Allāh! I wish you had seen the daughter of Khārijah (Sayyidunā ‘Umar’s wife رض) when she asked me for some money. I got up and slapped her on her neck.” The Messenger of Allāh ص smiled and said, “They are around me as you see, asking for extra money.”

Sayyidunā Abū Bakr رض then got up, went to Sayyidatunā ‘Aishah رض and counselled her, and Sayyidunā ‘Umar رض stood up before Sayyidatunā Hafṣah رض and counselled her saying, “Do not ask the Prophet of Allāh ص for that which he does not have.” They said, “By Allāh, we do not ask the Prophet of Allāh ص for anything he (ص) does not possess.”<sup>238</sup>

Sayyidunā ‘Umar رض narrates:

When the Prophet of Allāh ص kept himself away from his wives, I entered the Masjid, and found people striking the ground with stones and saying: “The Prophet of Allāh ص has divorced his wives.” This was before they were commanded to observe seclusion.

I went in and found Rabāh, the servant of the Prophet ص, sitting on the edge of the window dangling his feet on the hollow wood of the date-palm with the help of which the Prophet ص climbed up (into the house) and came down. I cried, “O Rabāh! Seek permission for me from the Prophet ص.<sup>239</sup>”

Rabāh cast a glance at the house and then looked towards me but said nothing. I again said, “Rabāh, seek permission for me from the Beloved of Allāh ص. Rabāh looked towards the house and then cast a glance at me, but said nothing. I then raised my voice and said, “O Rabāh! Seek permission for me from the Prophet of Allāh ص. I think that Allāh’s Messenger ص is under

<sup>235</sup> *Al-Tabaqāt al-Kubrā*, (Ibn Sa‘d), Bāb Ghazwah Badr, vol. 2, p. 16.

<sup>236</sup> *Dala'il al-Nubuwwah* (Imām al-Bayhaqī), vol. 3, p. 110.

<sup>237</sup> *Sahīh Muslim*, Kitāb al-Talāq, Ḥadīth #2703, vol. 2, p. 439.

the impression that I have come for the sake of Hafṣah. By Allāh! If the Prophet ﷺ would command me to strike her neck, I would certainly strike her neck!" I raised my voice and he indicated to me to climb up (into the house). I visited the Messenger ﷺ and he (ﷺ) was lying on a mat. I sat down and he drew up his lower garment over him and he had nothing (else) over him, and the mat had left its marks on his sides. I looked with my eyes in the store room of the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ. I found only a handful of barley equal to one Sā' and an equal quantity of the Mimosa leaves placed in the nook of the cell, and a semi-tanned leather bag hanging, and I was moved to tears (on seeing this extremely austere lifestyle of the Holy Prophet ﷺ).

On entering I saw signs of anger on his blessed face, I therefore said, "O Messenger of Allāh! What concerns you about your wives? and if you have divorced them, verily Allāh is with you; and His angels, Jibrīl, Mikārīl, I and Abū Bakr and the believers are with you."

And so the verse of Option (*Ayat al-Takhyīr*) was revealed, "*If you both (wives of the Holy Prophet), incline towards Allāh, for indeed your hearts have deviated a little; and if you come together against him then indeed Allāh is his Supporter, and Jibrīl and the virtuous believers are also his aides; and in addition the angels are also his aides.*" (6:4)

I enquired, "Messenger of Allāh, have you divorced them? He ﷺ said, "No." I said, "Messenger of Allāh! The conjecture of the people is contrary to this – when I entered the Masjid and found the Muslims playing with pebbles (absorbed in thought) and saying, "The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ has divorced his wives." Should I inform them that you have not divorced them to correct their misunderstanding?" He said, "Yes, if you so like."

I continued talking to him (ﷺ) until I saw the signs of anger disappear from his blessed face and (his seriousness was changed to a happy mood and as a result thereof) his face had the natural tranquillity upon it and he (ﷺ) smiled – and his teeth were the most beautiful. Then the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ climbed down and I also climbed down by catching hold of the wood of the palm-tree, but he (ﷺ) came down as if he was walking on the ground, not touching anything with his hand for support). I said, "Messenger of Allāh! You remained in your house for twenty-nine days." He said, "The month consists of twenty-nine days." I stood at the door of the Masjid and I called out at the top of my voice, "The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has not divorced his wives..."<sup>239</sup>

**Reason 22:** No one had the permission of passing judgement or an edict without the permission of the Prophet ﷺ except for Sayyidunā Abū Bakr and Sayyidunā 'Umar (ﷺ). This will be elaborated in the Section of Knowledge.

**Reason 23:** No one shall be allowed to take their book of deeds before Sayyidunā Abū Bakr and Sayyidunā 'Umar (ﷺ). The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ has said, "A caller will call out on the Day of judgement saying, 'No one should take their book of deeds before Abū Bakr and 'Umar (ﷺ)."<sup>240</sup>

The waiting period before the commencement of the accounting on the Day of Judgement will be unbearable. People will plead for the accounting to take place so that they be freed from this terrible state. However, Allāh will remove the two beloveds of His Beloved ﷺ first from this situation.

<sup>239</sup> Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Kitāb al-Talāq, Hadith #1479, p. 783.

<sup>240</sup> Jām' al-Jawāmi', Ḥadīth #17572, vol. 1, p. 244.

**Reason 24:** He ﷺ has said, "The first of my Community to enter Jannah will be Abū Bakr (رضي الله عنه)."<sup>241</sup>

**Reason 25:** The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ has said, "Everyone will be held to account (on the Day of Judgement) save Abū Bakr (رضي الله عنه)."<sup>242</sup>

**Reason 26:** The Prophet ﷺ also said to Sayyidunā Abū Bakr and Sayyidunā 'Umar ﷺ, "After me, no one shall rule over you."<sup>243</sup>

**Reason 27:** During the prayers, the *Shaykhayn* would stand in the first row on the right hand side of the Prophet ﷺ.<sup>244</sup>

**Reason 28:** Sayyidunā Aswad al-Tamīmī رضي الله عنه narrates, "I recited a few verses in praise of Allāh in the presence of Beloved Prophet ﷺ. Whilst I was reading them out, a tall man with small eyes entered. The Prophet ﷺ told me to pause. When he left, the Prophet ﷺ told me to resume. I asked about the person, so he replied, "He is 'Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb and he keeps no relation with falsehood."<sup>245</sup>

**Reason 29:** If ever there was a disagreement between Sayyidunā Abū Bakr radiyAllāhu 'anhu and a Companion, the latter would always show respect to him. If the Prophet ﷺ was informed of such disagreements and arguments then he would

reprimand the Companion even if the liability would lie with Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Siddiq رضي الله عنه.

We have already cited the Hadith previously (under reason 15): Once Sayyidunā Rabī'ah Ibn Ka'b and Sayyidunā Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه had an argument. The Prophet ﷺ was informed so he (رضي الله عنه) said, "O Rabī'ah, what's wrong with you and al-Siddiq?" He replied saying, "Prophet of Allāh! He wanted me to say the same words to him as he had said to me and I did not."

The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ, "Yes, don't say the same words to him as he had said to you. Instead say: 'May Allāh forgive you, Abū Bakr.' With tears in his eyes, Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه went away while saying, 'May Allāh reward you with goodness for my sake, O Rabī'ah Ibn Ka'b, May Allāh reward you with goodness for my sake, O Rabī'ah Ibn Ka'b...'"<sup>246</sup>

It is related that Sayyidunā Abū al-Dardā رضي الله عنه said, "I was sitting with the Prophet ﷺ when Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه came, holding the end of his garment so that he uncovered his knee. The Prophet ﷺ said, "Your companion has had a disagreement." He greeted him (رضي الله عنه) and said, "There was a disagreement between me and Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb. I spoke harshly to him and then regretted it. I asked him to forgive me and he refused to do so; so I came to you. The Holy Prophet ﷺ said, "May Allāh forgive you, Abū Bakr" thrice. Then Sayyidunā 'Umar رضي الله عنه felt remorseful and went to the house of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه and asked, "Is Abū Bakr there?" They said, "No." So he went to the Prophet ﷺ and conveyed the greeting of peace, while the complexion of the blessed face of the Prophet ﷺ began to change. So fearing the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ would speak against Sayyidunā 'Umar رضي الله عنه, Sayyidunā Abū Al-Tabaqāt al-Kubrā (Ibn Sa'd), Dhikr Wasīyyat Abū Bakr, vol.3, p. 211.

<sup>241</sup> Sunan Abī Dāwūd, Bāb Fī al-Khulāfa, Hadith #4033, vol.2, p. 331

<sup>242</sup> Tabaqāt al-Muhammadīthīn bi Aṣbahān, Dhikr Ibrāhīm Ibn Abī Yaḥyā, Hadith #495, vol. 1, p. 243.

<sup>243</sup> Jāmi' al-Āḥadīth (Imām al-Ṣuyūṭī), Hadith #24929, vol. 13, p. 295.

<sup>244</sup> Sunan Abī Dāwūd, vol. 12, p. 16

<sup>245</sup> Al-Mu'jam al-Awsat, Hadith 5794, vol. 4, p. 224.

<sup>246</sup> Musnād Ahmad Ibn Ḥanbal, vol. 4, p. 58.

Bakr ﷺ knelt and said, "O Messenger of Allāh, by Allāh, I was more in the wrong," and said this twice. The Prophet ﷺ said, "Allāh sent me to you all and denied<sup>247</sup> whilst Abū Bakr affirmed and consoled me by himself and his property. Will you not leave for me my Companion?" and said this twice. After this, no one caused any harm to Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ﷺ."<sup>248</sup>

My friend! Do these reasons not make it apparent to you their status and their position in the eyes of the most Beloved of Allāh ﷺ? This part is very lengthy but this would suffice a person with sound intellect.

In the actions of the heart and the body, in every movement, Muslims try to imitate, emulate and follow the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ as much as possible in order to gain salvation and high ranks in both worlds. This is in relation to actions which are under a person's control [*la f al ikhtiyariyyah*]. But when Allāh's grace is upon an individual, even his involuntary actions and states [*ahwal ghayr ikhtiyariyyah*] are also made that of the Prophet's ﷺ.

Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Šiddīq ﷺ received such an honour that he had the greatest resemblance to the Prophet ﷺ. To such an extent is this resemblance that it is simply impossible to enumerate. Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ says, "O Abū Bakr! You resembled the Prophet ﷺ the most in the manner of walking, talking, in mercy and in grace."<sup>249</sup>

A few resemblances are listed below:

**Resemblance 1:** The opinions and inclinations of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Šiddīq ﷺ would match those of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ. We would find that any view of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ﷺ or inclination on a matter would mirror that of the Beloved ﷺ.

### Section C3: al-Kalām al-Bahīyy fī Tashabbuh al-Šiddīq bi al-Nabiyy (ﷺ)

[Magnificent Words in the Resemblance of al-Šiddīq with the Prophet ﷺ]

<sup>247</sup> Hesitated in accepting

<sup>248</sup> *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Kitāb Faḍā'il Aṣḥāb al-Nabiyy ﷺ, Hadith #3661, p. 895, 139.

<sup>249</sup> *Al-Bahr al-Zakh-khār*, Muṣnād 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib ﷺ, Hadith #928, vol. 3, p. 139.

At Hudaybiyyah, after being prevented entry into Makkah, the Muslims including Sayyiduna 'Umar رض felt frustrated as they had to return back to Madinah the Illuminated. He disclosed his feelings to the Prophet of Allāh صلی اللہ علیہ وسَلَّمَ and then to Sayyiduna Abū Bakr al-Šiddīq رض. The words of Sayyiduna Abū Bakr al-Šiddīq رض were exactly the same as the words of the Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسَلَّمَ.<sup>250</sup>

**Resemblance 2:** The Messenger of Allāh صلی اللہ علیہ وسَلَّمَ abstained from sitting in the gathering of the disbelievers. Sayyiduna Abū Bakr al-Šiddīq رض also did not like such gatherings. From the age of eighteen, he accompanied the Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسَلَّمَ on all journeys. Then when the Prophet of Allāh صلی اللہ علیہ وسَلَّمَ declared his Prophethood, this companionship became even stronger.

250 On behalf of the Muslims, the Messenger of Allāh صلی اللہ علیہ وسَلَّمَ signed the agreement while Suhayl bin 'Amr signed it on behalf of the disbelievers of Quraysh. Shortly afterwards, the tribe of Khuzā'ah allied themselves to the Messenger of Allāh صلی اللہ علیہ وسَلَّمَ and the tribe of Banū Bakr allied themselves to the Quraysh.

Sayyiduna 'Umar رض was amongst those who felt that it was excessive tolerance and resilience on the part of the Messenger صلی اللہ علیہ وسَلَّمَ, and the disrespect of the Qurayshi representative Suhayl.

Two points in the treaty made it distasteful to some Muslims, namely they were not given access to the Holy Sanctuary that year, and the seemingly humiliating attitude as regards reconciliation with the pagans of Quraysh. Sayyiduna 'Umar رض, unable to contain himself went to the Messenger of Allāh صلی اللہ علیہ وسَلَّمَ and said: "Aren't you the true Messenger of Allāh?" The Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسَلَّمَ replied calmly, "Why not?" Sayyiduna 'Umar رض again spoke and asked: "Aren't we on the path of righteousness and our enemies in the wrong?" Without showing any resentment, the Beloved Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسَلَّمَ replied that indeed it was so.

On getting this reply he further urged: "Then we should not suffer any humiliation in the matter of Faith." The Messenger of Allāh صلی اللہ علیہ وسَلَّمَ was unruffled and with perfect confidence said: "I am the true Messenger of Allāh, I never disobey Him, He shall help me."

"Did you not tell us," rejoined Sayyiduna 'Umar رض, "That we shall perform pilgrimage?" "But I have never told you," replied the Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسَلَّمَ, "that we shall do so this very year."

Sayyiduna 'Umar رض was silenced. But his mind was unsettled.

He went to Sayyiduna Abū Bakr al-Šiddīq رض and expressed his feelings before him. Sayyiduna Abū Bakr al-Šiddīq رض who had never been in doubt as regards the Holy Prophet's صلی اللہ علیہ وسَلَّمَ truthfulness and veracity confirmed what the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسَلَّمَ had told him and replied in exactly the same words as was the reply of the Messenger صلی اللہ علیہ وسَلَّمَ. In due course the Chapter of Victory (48th) was revealed saying: "Verily, We have given you (O Beloved - رض) a manifest victory." [48:1] The Messenger of Allāh صلی اللہ علیہ وسَلَّمَ summoned Sayyiduna 'Umar رض and informed him of the glad tidings. Sayyiduna 'Umar رض was overjoyed, and greatly regretted his former attitude. He used to spend in charity, observe fasting and prayer

and free as many slaves as possible in expiation for the reckless attitude he had assumed.

[*Sahīh al-Bukhārī*, Book 54, Ḥadīth #2731, #2732, *Sharḥ Usūl I'ītiqād Ahl al-Sunnah* – Vol. 1, pg. 91 #2005, *al-Tabsīrah* – Imām ibn al-Jawzī, the 28th Discourse, Vol. 1, pg. 362, *al-Abādīth al-Mukhṭārah* – Inām al-Maqdīsī, Vol. 1, pg. 310 #397]

the stone at the idol and it fell onto the floor. His father came and asked, "O my son! What have you done?!" He replied, "That what you see before you."

He then took him to his mother and told her about what had happened. His mother said, "Leave him alone as Allāh informed me about his state." Sayyidunā Abū Bakr رض asked about it. She replied, "At the time of your birth, an unseen harbinger called, "O the true maid-servant of Allāh! Glad tidings to you that a freed son will be born, whose name in the heavens is 'al-Siddīq' and he will be the Companion and intimate friend of the Final Prophet صلی الله علیه و آله و سلّم."

When Sayyidunā Abū Bakr رض narrated this, Angel Jibrā'il عليه السلام came to the Prophet of Allāh صلی الله علیه و آله و سلّم and attested to the truth of this three times.<sup>251</sup>

**Resemblance 4:** Allāh has made the Prophet صلی الله علیه و آله و سلّم the paragon of mercy and affection.

The Almighty states:

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَّا رَحْمَةً

*And We did not send you (O Beloved Messenger - peace and blessings be upon him) except as a mercy for the entire world. [al-Anbiya - 21:107]*

لَهُجَّةُ الْكَوْكَبِ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ عَزِيزٌ مَّا كَعِنْدَهُ حَرِيصٌ عَلَيْكُمْ لَّا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِرَبِّهِمْ

رَحْمَةٌ

*Indeed there has come to you a Noble Messenger from among you - your falling into hardship aggrieves him, most concerned for your well being, for the Muslims most compassionate, most merciful. [al-Tawbah - 9:128]*

al-Siddīq al-Akbar Sayyidunā Abū Bakr رض is the most merciful upon the Community of the Prophet صلی الله علیه و آله و سلّم after him رض.

The Messenger of Allāh صلی الله علیه و آله و سلّم said: "The most merciful from my Community is Abū Bakr."<sup>252</sup>

In a variant narration it states, "The most affectionate from my Community (is Abū Bakr)."<sup>253</sup>

Ra'fah (affection) is greater than rāḥmah (mercy).

**Resemblance 5:** Allāh has made the Messenger of Allāh صلی الله علیه و آله و سلّم the embodiment of all virtues and excellences. There is not a single virtue of the previous Prophets صلی الله علیه و آله و سلّم which the Prophet صلی الله علیه و آله و سلّم has not been given.<sup>254</sup> Similarly, He made al-Siddīq al-Akbar, Sayyidunā Abū Bakr رض, the embodiment of all excellences.

The Prophet of Allāh صلی الله علیه و آله و سلّم has said, "There are 360 types of virtue. When Allāh intends to do good to a person, He bestows him with one of them which takes him to Jannah." Sayyidunā Abū Bakr رض asked, "O Prophet of Allāh! Do I have any of those virtues?" The

<sup>251</sup> Jāmi' al-Tirmidhī, Bāb Maṇāqib Mu'ādh ibn Jabal wa Zayd ibn Thābit, Vol. 2, Pg. 737

<sup>252</sup> Musnād Abī Ya'ī, Musnād 'Abd-Allāh ibn 'Umar, Vol. 3, Pg. 211 #5763, al-Sunan al-Kubrā - Imām al-Bayhaqī, Bāb Tarīḥ Qawl Zayd, Vol. 6, pg. 210 #12549, al-Maqālib al-'Alīyah (al-Asqalānī), Bāb Maṣṭarāt fī-hi Jāmā'ah, vol. 3, pg. 297 #4101

<sup>253</sup> Al-Mawāhib al-Ladunniyyah, (Imām al-Qastalānī), vol. 2, p. 318, Al-Shīfā (Imām al-Qādī 'Iyād), Chapter 10, pp. 79-80.

Prophet ﷺ replied, "Glad tidings O Abū Bakr! You possess all of them."<sup>255</sup>

Sayyidunā Abū Hurayrah ﷺ narrated that the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ has said, "Whoever gives two things in the way of Allāh will be called out from the gates of Paradise addressed, 'O slave of Allāh, here is prosperity!' So whoever from among the people used to offer their prayers will be called from the Gate of Prayer; and whoever from among the people used to participate in jihād will be called from the Gate of jihād; and whoever from among the people used to observe fasts will be called from the Gate of *al-Rayyān*; and whoever was among those who used to give in charity will be called from the Gate of Charity."

Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq ﷺ asked the Prophet ﷺ, "Will there be anyone who will be called from *all* these gates?" The Prophet ﷺ informed him, "Yes. And I hope you will be one of them."<sup>256</sup>

The scholars state that when a person does one type of worship in abundance, he will be called from the corresponding heavenly gate. However, if a person has excelled in all types of worship in such a way that preference cannot be given to one type of worship over another, he will be called from all the gates of Jannah. This is the honour such a person will be given on the Day of judgement, though entry will only be through one.

The scholars have also stated that the 'hope' of the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ ("I hope...") denotes certainty. Thus it shows that Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq ﷺ is an embodiment of this great virtue and excellence.

**Resemblance 6:** The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ was bestowed with the gift of *'Jawāmi' al-kalim*<sup>257</sup> (Compendium of Speech)<sup>258</sup> such that books can be written in the commentary of his speech. For example, "[The merit of] Actions are based on intentions (*Imāma'l-Āmālu bi'n-Niyyāt*)"<sup>259</sup>, "Accept Islām, you will be safeguarded (*Aslīm Tuslam*)"<sup>260</sup> and so forth.

Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq ﷺ was also gifted with this by the blessing of his beloved ﷺ. Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ says, "O Abū Bakr! Your words are the finest, your state is the most correct, you are the most silent and your words are the most eloquent."<sup>261</sup>

Similarly, Sayyidunā 'Umar ﷺ spoke about the eloquence of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq ﷺ, "By Allāh, I intended only to say something that appealed to me and I was afraid that Abū Bakr would not speak so well. Then Abū Bakr spoke and his speech was very eloquent."<sup>262</sup> In another narration he says, "Abū Bakr beckoned me to keep quiet. Therefore, I remained silent. Abū Bakr had better eloquence and knowledge as

<sup>255</sup> *Makārim al-Akhlaq*, (Imām Ibn Abī Dunyā), Bāb Aṭfāl Akhlaq Ahl al-Dunyā wa al-Ākhira, p. 25.

<sup>256</sup> *Tārīkh Dimashq* (Ibn 'Asākir), Man Ismuḥū 'Abd-Allāh wa Yuqāl 'Atīq, vol. 30, p. 103.

<sup>257</sup> *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Bāb Bad' al-Wahy, Ḥadīth #1, vol. 1, p. 3.

<sup>258</sup> *Musnād Imām Ahmad*, Musnād Abī Hurayrah, vol.3, p. 187.

<sup>259</sup> Being both concise yet comprehensive.

<sup>260</sup> *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Bāb Bad' al-Wahy, Ḥadīth #13, vol. 1, p. 158.

<sup>261</sup> *Al-Āhādīth al-Mukhtārah*, (Imām al-Maqdisī), vol. 1, p. 398.

<sup>262</sup> *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Bāb Qawl al-Nabiyy ﷺ, Ḥadīth #398, vol. 1, p. 171.

compared to me. He spontaneously spoke the same things I had thought of and articulated them even better.”<sup>263</sup>

## APPENDIX 1

### Additional Resemblances<sup>265</sup>

**Resemblance 7:** After receiving the first revelation, the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ went to the Mother of the Believers, Sayyidatunā Khadijah ؓ with his heart overflowing with the first revelation.

She consoled him ؓ saying, “It cannot be. Be cheerful. I swear by Allāh that He will never humiliate you. By Allāh, you join ties of kinship and you support the weak and feeble and you bring gain for the destitute and you are bounteous toward a guest, and you help those in genuine distress.”<sup>264</sup>

**Resemblance 9:** His blessed resting place is the same blessed resting place of the Messenger ﷺ.

**Resemblance 10:** The apparent cause of his departure was the poisonous bite from the snake. Similarly, the apparent cause of the Beloved’s (ﷺ) departure was the poisoned meat he was given by the Jewish woman.

**Resemblance 11:** A person is created from the soil he is returned to<sup>266</sup>. Thus, the blessed soil from which Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq [and Sayyidunā ‘Umar ؓ] were created is from the very spot from which the blessed soil of the Beloved ﷺ was taken.<sup>267</sup>

<sup>263</sup> Ibid. vol. 2, p. 306.

<sup>264</sup> Ibid. Ḥadīth #3, vol. 1, p. 5.

The Imām most likely mentioned the words of Ibn al-Daghīnah when Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq ؓ was leaving the blessed city of Makkah, “A man like Abū Bakr will not go out nor will he be turfed out. Do you expel a man who helps the poor earn their living, keeps good relations with kin, helps the weak, provides guests with food and shelter, and helps the people during their troubles...” [Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, Bāb Jiwār Abī Bakr fī ‘Ahd al-Nabīyy ؓ, Ḥadīth #2134, vol. 2, p. 211].

It is worth noting the five things mentioned by the Mother of the Believers, Sayyidatunā Khadījah ؓ to the Prophet ﷺ, were exactly the same words used to describe Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq ؓ.

Imām Shīhāb al-Dīn al-Suhrawardī relates in ‘Awārif al-Ma‘rīf: “When the water was tumultuous i.e. the Flood during the time of Sayyidunā Nūh ؓ, it took the blessed soil and deposited it in that very spot in which lies his blessed Mausoleum in al-Madinah al-Munawwarah.”

**Resemblance 12:** The day of his departure from this mundane world, Monday, was the same day of departure of the Beloved

**Resemblance 13:** Upon arrival to al-Madinah al-Munawwarah, his face resembled the blessed countenance of the Beloved. So much so, that the people of al-Madinah al-Munawwarah, who were anxiously waiting to welcome the Beloved Messenger ﷺ, were confused as to who was who.

**Resemblance 14:** Sayyiduna Abū Bakr ؓ was *raqiq al-qalb*. Such was also the description of the heart of the Beloved Messenger ﷺ.

**Resemblance 15:** Sayyiduna Abū Bakr is *al-Šiddiq* ؓ – a noble characteristic that was conferred to the Beloved ؓ, something

It has been reported on the authority of Sayyiduna Ka'b al-Abbar ؓ who relates: "Verily, when Allāh Almighty intended to create the most noble of all the sons of Sayyiduna Adam ؓ – Sayyiduna Muhammād ؓ. He instructed Sayyiduna Jibrīl ؓ, the trustworthy angel, ordering him to bring a sufficient quantity of clay from the purest and most exalted place on earth. Sayyiduna Jibrīl ؓ descended down to earth alongside the angels of al-Firdaws and the angels of the Loftiest Realm (*al-Ma'la' al-At'ā*). He then took a handful of clay, which was resplendent in whiteness and light, from the site of what is now the Holy Prophet's ؓ blessed resting place, as there can be no better place on earth than this site.

This clay was taken and then mixed with the waters of the river Tasnim, from the rivers which flow in Paradise, until it became something akin to a white pearl, which emitted a resplendent light.

It was then shown to all the seven layers of the heavens and the earth, and amid showers of praise and glorification it was made known to all dwellers of Heaven and earth that this substance had found acceptance and high honour in the Divine Presence."

[*al-Anwār al-Muhammadiyyah min al-Mawāhib al-Ladunniyyah* – Imām Yūsuf ibn Iṣmā'īl al-Nabḥānī – Pg. 9-10]

which even the disbelievers and pagans of Makkah by accepting him ؓ to be as *al-Šādiq* and *al-Amin*.

**Resemblance 16:** Sayyiduna Abū Bakr al-Šiddiq ؓ was *thāniy al-thayn* – Second of the Two.

**Resemblance 17:** Sūrat al-Layl was revealed for Sayyiduna Abū Bakr ؓ and Sūrat al-Duḥā for the Beloved ؓ.<sup>268</sup>

<sup>268</sup> Imam Ahmad Ridā Khān al-Qādīrī writes in *al-Zulāl al-Anqā' min Bahr Sābqat al-Atqā* [The Refreshing Pure Water from the Ocean of the Supercedence of al-Atqa – the Most God-fearing One]:

"Imām [Fakhr al-Dīn] al-Rāzī states in his *Tafsīr – Maṭāfīth al-Grayb*: Sūrat al-Layl, is the Sūrah of Sayyiduna Abū Bakr al-Šiddiq ؓ and Sūrat al-Duḥā is the Sūrah of the Beloved Messenger of Allāh ؓ. There are no gaps between the two Sūrāhs, so from this it can be clearly understood that there is no separation between the Beloved Messenger ؓ and Sayyiduna Abū Bakr ؓ. Thus, when you make mention of *wa al-Layl* (the Night) first and then *wa al-Duḥā* (the bright Mid-Morning), this denotes the transition from night to day and vice versa.

I state: Sūrat al-Layl precedes Sūrat al-Duḥā due to the fact that the former Sūrah is a rebuttal and a rejoinder to the false and baseless accusations and calumny the *kuffār* laid on Sayyiduna Abū Bakr al-Šiddiq ؓ. Sūrat al-Duḥā is a rejoinder answering and refuting the objections and accusations of the Kuffār against the Beloved Messenger ؓ. It is absolutely clear that the exoneration of the Beloved ؓ does not necessitate the disavowal of Sayyiduna Abū Bakr al-Šiddiq ؓ, whilst the exoneration of Sayyiduna Abū Bakr ؓ does by default necessitate the disavowal of the Beloved ؓ. Thus, the wisdom by the Divine Order was to have Sūrat al-Layl preceded Sūrat al-Duḥā, so that both personalities can be exonerated of the false and baseless accusations of the *kuffār*. Had Sūrat al-Layl to come after, the defense and exoneration of Sayyiduna Abū Bakr ؓ would have been delayed.

The Sūrah of Sayyiduna Abū Bakr ؓ is al-Layl which means 'the Night,' in which man gains peace, comfort, tranquility. The name of the Sūrah related to the Beloved ؓ is Sūrat al-Duḥā, which means the 'Mid-Morning,' in which one gains light and brightness and luminosity, so that it is indicative of the fact

**Resemblance 18:** Sayyiduna Abū Bakr al-Šiddīq رض was the most generous of people<sup>269</sup>, emulating the generosity of the Beloved رس who is generous more than *al-rīh al-mursalāh* (swift wind bringing rain).

**Resemblance 19:** Sayyiduna Abū Bakr رض is the best of the entire creation after the Prophets and Messengers, whilst the Beloved رس is, unconditionally, the best of the entire creation.

**Resemblance 20:** Sayyiduna Abū Bakr al-Šiddīq رض was the *Imām* of the Ṣahābah, just as the Beloved رس was their *Imām*.

**Resemblance 21:** Sayyiduna Abū Bakr رض was the first and foremost to testify [*taṣdīq*] to everything that the Beloved Messenger رس informed him, whilst the Beloved رس would also testify to the truthfulness of Sayyiduna Abū Bakr al-Šiddīq رض.

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that the Beloved رس is the luminosity, the light of guidance and success for Sayyiduna Abu Bakr رض, whilst Sayyiduna Abu Bakr رض is the means of the Beloved's رس comfort, serenity and tranquillity and peace of mind.

Furthermore, the system of religion is established and enacted on both; just as the day and the night are indispensable for the establishment and enactment of the system of the entire universe. Without the day, one is unable to see, and without night one is unable to gain comfort and peace. [*al-Zulal al-Anqā' - Pgs. 206-207*]  
<sup>269</sup> Sayyiduna Abu Bakr al-Šiddīq رض had 40,000 dirhams, of which he spent 35,000 in the Way of Allāh prior to the Emigration. He took with him the remaining 5,000, which he then spent to purchase the piece of land upon which rests the blessed Mausoleum, the *Riyād al-Jāmah* and the rest of al-Masjid al-Nabawī al-Sharīf.

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